THE SAINTS DAILY EXERCISE.

A Treatiſe
Vnfolding the whole dutie
of PRAYER.
Delivered
In fiue Sermons vpon 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 17.

By the late faithfull and worthy Miniſter of Ieſus Chriſt,

IOHN PRESTON,

Dr. in Divinity, Chaplaine in ordinary to his *Maieſty*, Maſter of *Emmanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and ſometimes Preacher of *Lincolnes* Inne.

The ſecond Edition, corrected.

The effectuall fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Iames. 5. 16.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare my prayer. Pſal. 66. 18.

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TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader.

TO discourse largely of the necessity and vse of this peece of spirituall armour, after so many learned and vsefull Treatises, vpon this subiect, may seeme superfluous, especially considering that there is much spoken to this purpose, for thy satisfaction, in the insuing Treatise; wherein, besides the vnfolding of the nature of this dutie, (which is the Saints daily exercise) and strong inforcement to it, there is an endeavour to giue satisfaction in the most incident cases, want of clearing whereof is vsually an hindrance to the cheerefull, and ready performance thereof. In all which, what hath beene done by this Reverend and worthy man, we had rather should appeare in the Treatise it selfe, to thy indifferent iudgement, then to bee much in setting downe our owne opinion. This we doubt not of, that, by reason of the spirituall, and convincing manner of handling this Argument, it will winne acceptance with many, especially considering, that it is of that nature, wherein, though much haue beene spoken, yet much more may be said with good relish to those that haue anie spirituall sense: for it is the most spirituall action, wherein wee haue nearer communion with God, then in anie other holie performance, and whereby it

pleaſeth God *to conveigh all good to vs, to the performance whereof Chriſtians finde moſt backwardneſſe, and indiſpoſedneſſe, and from thence moſt deiection of ſpirit; which alſo in theſe times, is moſt neceſſarie, wherein, vnleſſe we fetch helpe from heaven, this way, wee ſee the Church and Cauſe of* God *like to be trampled vnder feete. Onelie, remember, that we let theſe Sermons paſſe forth as they were delivered by himſelfe, in publicke, without taking that libertie of adding or detracting, which, perhaps, ſome would haue thought meete: for wee thought it beſt that his owne meaning ſhould be expreſsed in his owne words and manner, eſpecially conſidering there is little which perhaps may ſeeme ſuperfluous to ſome, but may, by Gods bleſsing, be vſefull to others. It would be a good prevention of many inconveniences, in this kinde, if able men would bee perſwaded to publiſh their owne works in their life time, yet wee thinke it a good ſervice to the Church, when that defect is ſupplyed by giving ſome life to thoſe things, which otherwiſe would haue died of themſelues. The bleſsing of theſe labours of his we commend vnto* God, *& the benefit of them vnto thee, reſting*

Thine in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,

RICHARD SIBBS.

IOHN DAVENPORT.

THE SAINTS DAILY EXERCISE.

THE FIRST SERMON.

1 THESS. 5. 17.

Pray continually.

THE Apoſtle here, in the latter end of this Epiſtle, heapes vp many precepts together, and therefore we ſhall not neede to ſeeke out the dependance of theſe words from thoſe that go before, or thoſe that follow after. *Reioyce evermore* (ſaith hee) *Pray continually, In all things give thankes:*

thankes: for this is the will of God in Chriſt Ieſus to you wards.

Wee are now fallen vpon this Text, where this duty of prayer is commended to vs, and it is a command from *God* himſelfe delivered ſhortly, as lawes are wont to bee, without any great premiſes and reaſons, and indeed, having therefore the more authority in it.

Pray Continually.

3. Things conſiderable, for opening of the wordes.

IN the handling of which, we will doe theſe three things.

Firſt, we will ſhew you what *Prayer* is.

Secondly, why the *Lord* requires this at our hands; for a man might obiect, the *Lord* knowes my wants well enough, he knowes my mind, and how I am affected? I, but yet the *Lord* will haue vs to *pray*, and to aske before he will beſtow it vpon vs.

And laſtly, what it is to *pray continually.*

1. What prayer is.

1. In generall.

For the firſt. If we would define *prayer* in generall to you, I would giue you no more but this deſcription of it. *It is an expreſſion of the minde to the Lord*: ſometimes by words, ſometimes without words, but yet there muſt be an expreſſion, and ſome opening of the will to him. This is the generall.

2. In ſpeciall.

But now to know what a right *prayer* is, what ſuch a *prayer* is, as *God* accepts; you muſt haue another definition which muſt haue more ingredients into it, and ſo, *Prayer is*, nothing elſe but *an expreſſion, or offering of thoſe holy, and good diſpoſi-*

tions

tions to God, that ariſe from the ſpirit, or the regenerate part, in the name of Ieſus Chriſt. Where you are to obſerue this; That the *prayers*, that wee make, are divided into one of theſe two ſorts.

Diviſion of prayers into two ſorts.

1

Firſt, ſome are ſuch *prayers* as are the expreſſion of our owne ſpirits, the voice of our owne ſpirits, and there is nothing but fleſh in them; ſuch prayers as any naturall man may make to the *Lord*. And theſe the *Lord* regards not, hee knowes not the meaning of them, that is, hee doth not accept them.

Note.

2

Secondly, There are prayers that are the voice of *Gods* own Spirit, that is, ſuch as ariſe from the regenerate part which is within vs, which is quickened and inlarged to *pray* from the immediate helpe of the *holy Ghoſt*; Theſe prayers are onely accepted: And of theſe it is ſaid, *he knowes the meaning of the Spirit*: That is, hee ſo knowes it, and ſees it, that alſo he accepts it. Therefore you ſhall ſee in *Hoſea* 7. 14. when they prayed, and prayed earneſtly, yea they ſet a day apart for prayer, they called a ſolemne Aſſembly, and kept a faſt, yet, ſaith the *Lord* plainly, *yee did not call vpon me when you howled vpon your bedds; for*, (ſaith he) *you aſſembled your ſelues for corne, and for wine*, which any naturall man may doe; And therefore, (ſaith he) it is but a *howling*: It is the voice of beaſts to ſeeke for wine, and oyle, and corne, but hee ſaith plainely, *you called not vpon me*; when notwithſtanding, they ſpent a whole day in prayer. But the meaning is, that the *Lord* regards this as no prayer at all.

Rom: 8.27.

Hoſea 7. 14.

The termes of the description opened:

And therefore, to open a little this description vnto you: for it is one maine businesse that we haue to doe, in the handling of this Text, to describe to you the meaning of this precept, what the nature of *prayer* is, that you may know what kinde of *prayer* it is, that prevailes with GOD. I say, *it is an expression of holy and good dispositions.* I vse that expression, rather of *dispositions* then *desires*, because there is some part of *prayer* that stands in thanksgiving, when you desire nothing at *Gods* hands, but giue thanks for that you haue received; marke, first, that they must be *holy*, and *good*, the desires and dispositions must be good: for that is a rule; all the affections and desires are good, or evill, according as their obiects are; those that are fixed vpon good things, are good desires.

1. Why hee vseth the vvord (dispositions) rather, then desires.

When the desires and dispositions of men are good.

Quest. You will say then, what are the good things that make the desires, and dispositions of the heart good?

Answ. They are temporall things, and spirituall both. A man may pray for temporall things in a spirituall manner, and the desire may be good; And againe, hee may pray for spirituall things in a carnall manner, and the desire may be naught. Therefore that must be obserued withall, that it is not simply the obiect, but there is a certaine manner of desiring too. For example, if a man pray for temporal things, for outward comforts such things as belong to the present estate of his body here; If he pray for them with these conditions, that he prayeth for that which is conveni-

That temporall things may bee desired in a carnall manner, and carnall things in a spirituall manner & how.

ent

ent for him, he prayes for ſuch a meaſure as GOD ſees to be meet, as *Pro. 31. Feed me with convenient food for me*; This prayer is good. But (*If any man will be rich*, as 1 *Tim.* 6.) it is an inordinate deſire, when men will haue exceſſe of theſe outward things, & more then is fit for them. And againe, if you deſire that which is *convenient*, and *ſpend it vpon your luſts*; If you deſire health, and long life, that you may liue more pleaſantly; If you deſire wealth, that you may liue more deliciouſly, and not ſimply that which the creature may deſire, and to the end that you may be the more enabled to ſerue the LORD in theſe things, your deſire is not good. So I ſay, firſt it muſt be for that which is *convenient*; ſecondly, you muſt not *ſpend it vpon your luſts*, but in GODS ſervice.

Prov. 31

1 Tim. 6. 9.

And laſtly, wee muſt pray for them in a right method, *Firſt the Kingdome of God, and then other things*, that is, ſet a price on them, as you ought, not too high a price, but value them aright. We ſhould ſo pray for outward things, as our prayers may bee ſpirituall. On the other ſide, a man may pray for ſpirituall things in a carnall manner, as for temporall things in a ſpirituall manner. A naturall man may pray earneſtly for faith, and for grace, and repentance, not out of any beautie that he ſees in them, not out of any taſte and reliſh that hee hath of them, but becauſe hee thinkes them a bridge to leade him to heaven, and that hee cannot come thither without them: when hee conſiders in his heart that hee cannot be ſaved without theſe things, I ſay, then hee may

deſire them, and deſire them earneſtly. It was the caſe of *Francis Spira*, who cryed ſo earneſtly for grace, that hee might haue but a drop of it, becauſe he could not be ſaved without it, he giues the reaſon himſelfe, hee ſaid withall; he ſaw no excellencie in it, he deſired it not for it ſelfe; and therefore hee thought his prayers ſhould not bee heard. Thus you ſee that prayer is an *expreſſion of holy and good deſires*, and *it is an offering them vp to the Lord.*

To God.

I will not ſtand vpon that (you are well enough inſtructed in it) that whatſoever petition is made to the creature, it is not a prayer, it muſt onely be offered vp to the *Lord.*

Then I adde, it is ſuch as muſt *ariſe from the regenerate part*, that is, looke how much there is of the *regenerate part* in a prayer, looke how much the *holy Spirit* hath to doe in it, looke how much comes from that which is called the *inward man*, ſo farre it is ſanctified, ſo farre that prayer is accepted, and no further. But, that we may open this a little more fully, we will ſhew you it by ſome other expreſſions of prayer, that wee finde in the Scriptures.

Ariſing from the ſpirit or regenerate part

It is called a *lifting vp of the heart to God, a pouring forth of the ſoule to the Lord*, 1 Sam. 1. 15. *A ſerving of him in ſpirit*, ſo *Paul* calleth it. Now if we open theſe phraſes vnto you a little, you ſhall know more fully wherein the nature of right praying to *God* conſiſts. That phraſe the Apoſtle vſeth, *whom I ſerue in my ſpirit* (it is the ſame word in the originall that is vſed for faſting & prayer)

1 Sam. 1. 1.

Acts. 13. 2.

Now

Now what is that to pray to *God* in the ſpirit? for wee may ſay, a man cannot make a prayer, but there is an act of his minde goes to it, and every man what ſervice ſoever he performes, his ſpirit muſt needes haue a hand in it, ſo that it cannot be performed without the minde.

I take this to be the meaning of it, the Apoſtle his ſcope, is to diſtinguiſh the true and holy ſervices of GOD from thoſe that are but ſhadowes, and counterfeit, that are but the body and carcaſſe of right ſervice. Therefore, when he ſaith, *I ſerue the Lord in my ſpirit*, or *I pray in the ſpirit*; The meaning is this, when the prayer of a man is not onely that which the vnderſtanding dictates to him, but when the whole ſoule, the will and affections goe together with his petition, and whatſoever the petition is, a mans heart is affected accordingly. As, for example, if a man come to confeſſe his ſinnes, and yet ſleights them inwardly in his heart; if a man pray for reconciliation with GOD, and yet haue no longing and ſighing in his heart after it, if hee earneſtly aske grace, and the mortification of ſinfull luſts, when the heart doth not inwardly ſeek it, now he praies not in the ſpirit. To pray in the ſpirit is as that in *Iohn* 4. 24. *He will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth.* The meaning is, ſo to pray, that the heart goe together with our petition; alſo, this is the meaning of thet when a man powreth forth his ſoule before the LORD. So *Hannah* ſaith of her ſelfe; *I am a woman troubled, &c. And powre out my ſoule before the Lord.* That is, when a man delivers Ioh. 4 24.

to GOD that which the vnderſtanding and mind hath deviſed; (for prayer is not a worke of wit, or of memorie) but when a man powreth forth his whole ſoule, (that is) his will, and affections, when they goe together, when there is no reſervation in his minde; but when all within him is opened and explicate, and expoſed to the view of the LORD, not as *Auſtin* ſaith of himſelfe, when he came to pray for the mortifying of his luſts, ſaith he, ***I had a ſecret inward deſire that it ſhould not bee done.*** Therefore when the ***ſoule is powred forth,*** the meaning is, that all be opened to him; ſo that when a man will make an acceptable prayer, hee muſt make this accompt, hee muſt then call in all his thoughts and affections, and recollect them together as the lines in the center, or as the Sunne beames in a burning glaſſe, and that makes prayer to be hot and fervent; whereas otherwiſe, it is but a cold and diſſipated thing, that hath no ſtrength or efficacie in it.

Simile.

Now with all, this you muſt know, that when wee ſay the whole ſoule muſt goe together with the petition, the meaning is, that not onely the will, and affections bee imployed, (for in a naturall man, in his deſire of health, when he is ſick, or wanteth aſſiſtance and guidance in difficult caſes, not onely the vnderſtanding, but the will and affections are buſie enough, it is likely) and therefore we adde that further, that that which is called the ſpirit, which is diffuſed in the whole ſoule, that that be ſet on worke in the performance of this holy dutie to the LORD, whenſoever wee ſeeke to him in prayer.

For

For this you know, that there are two things in a regenerate man, (for that you muſt take for granted by the way that no naturall man is able to make a prayer acceptable to GOD, ſeeing there is no ſpirit in him, but in the regenerate man) there is, I ſay, fleſh and ſpirit: now when we come to powre forth our heart to the LORD, that which lyes vppermoſt will be ready to be powred forth firſt; and that which is ſpirituall, it may be, lyes in the bottome, and that is kept in, and ſo a man may make a carnall prayer, though he be a holy man; that is, when the fleſh hath gotten the vpper hand, as in ſome fits it may; when the mind is filled with worldly ſorrow and worldly rejoycing, and worldly deſires, and theſe would be expreſſed to the LORD; it is a prayer that the LORD regards not, though the man bee holie, from whence it comes: but right prayer is this, when the regenerate part is acted and ſtirred vp, and the fleſh that hinders, muſt be removed. For you know this, that whereſoever there is a regenerate part in any man, there is a regenerate aptneſſe in that to call vpon GOD; and it cannot be diſjoyned from it, but that is not alwayes in act. As we ſee a fountaine, it hath alwayes an aptnes to powre forth water, it is readie to breake into a current, but if it be ſtopped with ſtones and mud, and other impediments, it cannot breake out, ſo he that is a regenerate man, that hath a holy part in him, there's an aptneſſe to prayer. Which is that which our Saviour ſaith, *Mat.* 26. 41. *The ſpirit is willing*, that, there is alwayes a willingneſſe

Simile.

Mat. 26. 41.

neſſe that followes the ſpirit, or the regenerate part in a holy man, but, ſaith he, *The fleſh is backward*, that is, it ſtops this fountaine, and therefore *Rom. 8. 27. The ſpirit* is ſaid there to *helpe our infirmities, and to make our requeſts for vs*; that is, even as a man remooues ſtones from a fountaine with his hands, and when he hath done that, it breaks out into a current, ſo the *holy Ghoſt* removes this fleſh, that ſtops vp the current, the ſpirit takes away thoſe carnall impediments that are in vs. And not onely ſo, but ſtirreth vp the regenerate part, and when that is done, we are able to make a ſpirituall prayer to GOD in *Chriſt Ieſus*; So that is the thing, that you are now to obſerue, That the ſpirit muſt helpe our infirmities, when wee come to call vpon GOD, and our prayers be ſo farre acceptable as they be the fruits of the regenerate part; now we want but one thing to adde in the definition.

Rom. 8. 27.

Offered vp in the name of Ieſus Chriſt.

They are ſuch prayers as are offered to God in the name of Ieſus Chriſt.

This is a thing that you all know, that thoſe prayers that are not offered vp in *Chriſt*, are not acceptable, becauſe the perſon is not regarded. It was the ſinne of *Vzziah* in the 2 *Chron.* 26. he would goe to the Temple himſelfe being a King on the throne, and he would offer incenſe without a Prieſt. Wee doe the very ſelfe-ſame thing, whenſoever we goe to offer vp any prayer to *God* without Chriſt Ieſus; In the olde law men might bring their ſacrifices, but ſtill the Prieſt muſt offer them; ſo muſt we here; and the reaſon is given,

2 Chron. 26.

ven, *Rev:*8. becauſe the prayers that come from vs ſavour of the fleſh, from which they come, and the *Angel* of the Covenant *mingleth much incenſe with them*, and makes them ſweet and acceptable to GOD, *with much incenſe*, that is, as the fleſh is more, ſo there needes more incenſe, that they may be made acceptable to GOD the Father. So that we haue indeed a double interceſſour: one is, *the ſpirit that helpes our infirmities*, that helpes vs to make our petitions, that quickens, and enlargeth our hearts to prayer: The other is the interceſſour to make them acceptable to GOD, that he may receiue them, and not refuſe and reject them. So much ſhall ſerue for the firſt thing, to ſhew you what the duty is, what a right, true, and acceptable prayer is.

Now for the ſecond, *why we muſt pray*, (for that objection a man may make) the *Lord* knowes my minde well enough, and what needes ſuch an expreſſion of it by prayer? The reaſons briefly why the *Lord* will haue vs to pray, are taken;

Partly from himſelfe.

And partly from vs.

2 Why the Lord will haue vs to pray.

1 In reſpect of himſelfe.

1. *Simile.*

2. *Simile.*

1. From himſelfe, though he be willing to beſtow mercies vpon vs, yet he will haue vs ask his leaue before he doth it. As, you know, fathers do with their children, though they intend to beſtow ſuch things vpon them, as are needfull, yet they will haue their children to ask them; & as it is a common thing among men, though they be willing a man ſhould paſſe through their ground, yet they will haue leaue asked, becauſe by that meanes

meanes the propertie is acknowledged, otherwise it would be taken as a common high way, so the *Lord* will haue his servants come and aske, that they may acknowledge the propertie hee hath in those gifts he bestowes vpon them: Indeede, otherwise we would forget in what tenure we hold these blessings wee enjoy, and what service wee owe to the *Lord*, as you know, there is an homage due to the *Lord*, that the *Lord* might be acknowledged; so the *Lord* will haue this duty of prayer performed, that we may acknowledge him, that we holde all of him, and that we might remember the service that we ought to doe to him, to rise and goe at his command, that is, to doe his service, which we would be ready to forget, if we were not accustomed to the duty of calling on him.

3 *Simile.*

2 Likewise he will haue it done for his honours sake, he will haue men call vpon him, that they may learne to reverence him, and likewise that others might be stirred vp to reverence him, and to honour him, and to feare him. The servants of a Prince doing honour and reverence to their Lord, they stirre vp those that are lookers on: And as the Schoolemen say of glory, Glory is properly this, not when a man hath an excellencie in him, (for that hee may haue, and yet be without glorie) but glorie is an ostentation, a shewing out of that excellencie. It is the phrase that is vsed in the Sacrament; you shall celebrate the Sacrament, that you may *shew forth the Lords death*; so the *Lord* will haue vs come and call vpon

Simile.

Glory what.

on his name to ſhew forth the duty of prayer, and that we may ſhew forth his glory. This is for the *Lord* himſelfe.

2 In reſpect of our ſelues.

Now for our ſelues, we are to doe it, partly, that the graces of his Spirit may be increaſed in vs: for prayer exerciſeth our graces; every grace is exerciſed in prayer, and they being exerciſed are increaſed. See an excellent place for this in *Iude* 20. *That you may edifie your ſelues in the holy faith praying in the holy Ghoſt*; as if hee ſhould ſay, the way to edifie your ſelues, and build vp your ſelues is to pray in the *holy Ghoſt*; that is, ſpirituall prayer made through the power, and aſſiſtance, and ſtrength of the *holy Ghoſt*: Every ſuch prayer builds vs vp, it increaſeth every grace in vs, faith, and repentance, and loue, and obedience, and feare, all increaſed by prayer.

1

Iude 20.

Partly, becauſe they are exerciſed and ſet on worke in prayer: for the very exerciſe increaſeth them.

2

And partly alſo, becauſe prayer brings vs to Communion with *God*. Now, if good company increaſe grace, how much more will Communion with the *Lord* himſelfe quicken and increaſe it.

3

Moreover, this duty is required, that we may be acquainted with *God*: for there is a ſtrangenes betweene the *Lord* and vs, when we doe not call vpon his name. It is the command which you ſhall finde in *Iob.* 22. 21. *Acquaint thy ſelfe with the Lord, that thou maiſt haue peace with him, and thou ſhalt haue proſperity*. Now, you know how acquain-

4.

Iob. 22. 21.

quaintance growes amongſt men; it is by converſing together, by ſpeaking one to another. On the other ſide, we ſay, when that is broken off, when they ſalute not, when they ſpeak not together, a ſtrangeneſſe growes; ſo it is in this: when wee come to the *Lord*, and are frequent, and fervent in this duty of calling vpon him, we grow acquainted with him, and without it wee grow ſtrangers, and the *Lord* dwells afarre off, we are not able to behold him, except we be accuſtomed to it, and the more wee come into his preſence, the more wee are acquainted with him. Therefore that is another reaſon why we ſhould vſe this, that we may get acquaintance with the *Lord*.

Simile.

5 Likewiſe, that we may learne to be thankefull to him for thoſe mercies we haue received from him; for, if God ſhould beſtow mercies vpon vs, vnasked, we would forget them, his hand would not be acknowledged in them; and wee would not ſee his providence in diſpoſing thoſe bleſſings that we doe enioy, but when wee come to aske every thing before him, we are then readie to ſee his hand more, and to prize it more, and we are diſpoſed to more thankefulneſſe. So that it is a ſure rule commonly, what we winne with prayer, that wee weare with thankefulneſſe, and that which wee get without prayer, wee ſpend, and vſe without any lifting vp of the heart to God, in praiſing him, and acknowledging his hand, in beſtowing it vpon vs; ſo you ſee what this duty is. And,

Note.

Secondly,

Secondly, vvhy the *Lord* vvill haue this duty performed.

Novv, thirdly, (in a vvord) vvhat is it to *pray continually*? The vvord in the originall signifieth, such a performance of this duty, that you doe not cease to doe it, at such times as GOD requires it at your hands. Compare this vvith that in the second Epistle to *Timothy*, 1. 3. The Apostle saith there, that he hath him in *continuall remembrance*, *praying for him night and day*, vvhence the same vvord is vsed that is here. Novv vvee cannot thinke that the Apostle had *Timothy* in continuall remembrance, that he vvas never out of his thought, but the meaning is, vvhen he did call vpon GOD, from day to day, he still remembred him. So that to *pray continually*, is to pray very much, to pray at those times vvhen GOD requires vs to pray. For it is the definition that Philosophers giue of idlenes, a man is then said to be idle, vvhen hee doth not that vvhich he ought, in the time vvhen it is required of him. He is an idle man that vvorks not, vvhen hee ought to vvorke; So hee is said not to pray continually, that prayes not vvhen hee ought to pray. So that I conceiue this to be the meaning of the Apostle, *Reioyce evermore*, (saith hee) but when hee comes to this exhortation of prayer, hee contents not himselfe to say pray very often, but pray continually, as vvee vse to expresse our selues vvhen vvee vvould haue a thing frequently done, vvee say, see that you be alvvayes doing of this. So the Apostles scope is

3. What it is to pray continually.

Ἀδιαλείπτως.

2 Tim. 1. 3.

Idlenesse, vvhat

to

to ſhew that it ſhould bee exceeding often, and that it ſhould bee very much done. Hence wee gather this by the way, that wee are bound to keepe our conſtant courſe of calling vpon *God*, at the leaſt twice a day, whatſoever we doe more.

Obſ. A conſtant courſe of prayer, at leaſt twice a day is a duty.

Queſt. But you will ſay, what ground haue you for that, why doe you inſtance in that twice a day?

Anſw. The grounds of it.

The ground of it is this, when the Apoſtle bids vs *pray continually*, doe it exceeding much, doe it very often, the leaſt we can doe it is twice a day, we may doe it oftner, but that, I ſay, is the leaſt. When wee haue ſuch a command as this, when we haue ſuch a precept as this, *Pray continually*; and this rule illuſtrated by ſuch examples as we haue in the Scriptures, why it is recorded, if it be not true of every example in that kinde that is ſaid of the generall example, 1 *Cor.* 10. *They are written for our learning?* when it is ſaid that *David* prayed oft, and *Daniel* expreſly in the 6. *Dan.* 3. *He prayed three times a day*, that was his conſtant courſe, I ſay, we may think we are bound to doe it at the leaſt twice a day. Conſider a little, the reaſon of it why we are bound to doe it; In the *Temple*, you know, the *Lord* was worſhipped twiſe a day, there was *the morning, and the evening ſacrifice*. What was the ground of that commandement? there was no reaſon of it, but that the *Lord* might be worſhipped, and that was the time that he would haue it done twice a day, morning and evening: but beſides that, it was not onely that

1. From the text

2. From examples,

Dan. 6. 3.

3. From reaſons

that the *Lord* might be worſhipped, (wherein we ſhould follow that example of worſhipping him morning and evening.) But likewiſe our occaſi- 2
ons are ſuch, that that is the leaſt wee can doe to call vpon him conſtantly morning and evening: for there is no day but we vſe many bleſſings, and wee take many of his creatures. Now wee may not take any of them without his leaue; ſo that thou art bound to aske for them before thou take them, and pray for a bleſſing vpon them; or elſe thou haſt no right to them, thou haſt no lawfull vſe of them; that place is plaine, 1 *Tim.* 4. *Every* 1 Tim 4.
Creature of God is good, and ought not to bee refuſed, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is ſanctified by prayer. So that, if you take common bleſſings every day, and doe not ſeeke them at the *Lords* hands before you take them, they are not ſanctified vnto you, you haue not a lawfull vſe of them, you haue no right vnto them.

Beſides, my *Beloved*, it is that which the LORD 3
commands in every thing, *Make your requeſts knowne in every thing*, that is, whenſoever you need any thing, make your requeſts knowne; ſo *in every thing giue thankes.* And therefore the leaſt we can doe when we haue received, and doe need ſo many mercies, is to giue thanks, and to ſeek to him ſo often, from day to day.

Moreover, doe not our hearts need it, are they not ready to goe out of order, are they not ready to contract hardneſſe, are they not ready to goe from the LORD, and to be hardned from *Gods* feare? Therefore this duty is needfull, in that re-

gard, to compoſe them, and bring them backe againe in order.

5. Moreover, doe not the ſinnes we commit daily, put a neceſſity vpon vs, of doing this, that they may be forgiven, and done away, and that wee may be reconciled to God againe? Therefore do not thinke that it is an arbitrary thing to call vpon God twice a day, becauſe there is no particular expreſſe command; forif you conſider theſe places that I haue named, and the reaſons, wee ſhall ſee there is a neceſſitie lyes vpon vs to doe it. So much ſhall ſerue for that, I come now to make ſome vſe of this that hath beene delivered.

Vſe 1. Firſt, in that ſuch praiers, as the *Lord* accepts, are an expreſſion of holy deſires, ſuch deſires as riſe from the regenerate part of a man; Hence then we ſee that al natural men are in a miſerable condition, when times of extreamitie come; and when the day of death comes, when there is no helpe in the worlld, but ſeeking to the *Lord*, when all the creatures forſake them, and are not able to helpe them; and there is no way to goe to the *Lord* but by prayer; if prayer bee an effect, and fruit of the regenerate part of a man, a carnal man is not able to helpe himſelfe, hee is in a miſerable condition. Therefore let men conſider this that put all off to times of extreamitie. Put the caſe, thou haſt warning enough, at ſuch a time; put the caſe thou haſt the vſe of thy vnderſtanding, yet thou art not able to doe any good without this: for, if there be not grace in the heart, thou art not

not able to make a spirituall prayer to the *Lord*, that the *Lord* accepts. Therefore take heede of deferring, and putting off; Labour to bee regenerate, to haue your hearts renewed, while you haue time, and if thou bee not able to call vpon GOD in the time of health, how wilt thou doe it when thy wits, and thy spirit are spent, and lost, and in the times of sicknes and extreamity? therfore let that bee considered, which wee doe but touch by the way briefly.

Secondly, if the *Lord* command this, if it be the command of *God*, *Pray continually*: Then take heed of neglecting this duty, rather be exhorted to be frequent, and fervent in it, to *continue therein, and watch thereto with all perseverance.* It is a common fault amongst vs, either wee are ready to omit it, or to come to it vnwillingly, or else we performe it in a careless, and negligent manner, not considering, what a command lyeth vpon the sons of men to performe it constantly, and conscionably. I beseech you consider this, that it is a priviledge purchased by the blood of *Iesus Christ*, *Christ* dyed for this end, it cost him the shedding of his blood, *That wee through him, might haue entrance to the throne of grace*, and will you let such a priviledge as this lie still? If you doe, so farre as is in you, you cause his blood to be shed in vaine: for, if you neglect the priviledges gotten by that blood, so far you neglect the blood, that procured them; but to neglect this duty is to neglect that. Besides, if wee aske you the reason, why you abstain from other sins, why

Vse 2.

Eph. 6.

Motiues to prayer.

1 *Mot.*

2. *Mot.*

you steale not, why you commit not adultery, and murther; The reason that you giue, is, because the LORD hath commanded you. Hath not the LORD commanded you to pray constantly, at all times?

If you make conscience of one commandement, why doe you not of another? consider *Daniel* in this case, in the 6. of *Daniel*, hee would not omit a constant course of prayer, hee did it three times a day, and that was his ordinary custome. If hee would not omit it to spare his life, if hee would not omit it in such a case of danger as that, why will you omit it for businesse, for a little advantage, for a little gaine, for a little wealth or pelfe, or pompe, or pleasure, or whatsoever may draw you from that duty? doe but consider what an vnreasonable, and what an vnequall thing it is, that when the LORD giues vs meate and drinke, and cloathes, from day to day, when he giues vs sleepe every night, when hee provides for vs such comforts, as wee haue needs of, as there is not the least creature that doth vs any service, but as farre as he sets it a work to doe that service, for vs to forget him, and not to giue him thankes, and not to aske these things at his hands, not to seek vnto him, but to liue as *without God in the world*, as we doe, when we neglect this duty: I say, it is a profession of living without GOD in the world; we are strangers to him, it is open rebellion against him. Therefore take heede of omitting it, take heede of neglecting it.

Dan. 6.

Eph. 2.

Besides

Beſides all this, wee ſhould doe it for our owne ſakes, if wee conſider what vſe we haue of this duty for our ſelues. Is it not the key that openeth all GODS treaſures? when heaven was ſhut vp, was not this the key that opened? when the wombes were ſhut vp, was not this it that opened? you know, *Eliah prayed for raine*; ſo we may ſay for every other bleſſing. All GODS treaſures are locked vp, to thoſe that doe not call vpon his name, this opens the doore to them all, whatſoever they be that we haue occaſion to vſe, this is effectuall; it doth it better then any thing beſides. If a man be ſicke, I will be bold to ſay it, a faithfull prayer is more able to heale his diſeaſe then the beſt medicine; *The prayer of faith ſhall heale the ſicke, Iam.* 5. you know, the woman that had the bloody iſſue, when ſhe had ſpent all vpon Phiſitians, and could doe no good; then ſhee comes to Chriſt, and offered a faithfull prayer to him, that did it, when ſo many years phiſick could not doe it; *Beloued*, if there be a Prince or a great man, whoſe mind we would haue turned towards vs, a faithfull prayer will doe it ſooner then the beſt friends. So it was with *Nehemiah*; you know his requeſt, that the LORD would *giue him fauour in the ſight of the man*, if we be in any ſtrait, as it was in *Ioſephs* caſe, if we haue any difficult matter to bring to paſſe, this prayer and ſeeking to the LORD will expedite, and ſet vs at liberty ſooner, it will finde a way to bring it about more then all the wits in the world; becauſe it ſets GOD on worke. You haue no power to doe any thing.

3. *Mot.*

Iames 5.

Nehem. 12.

Certainly a praying Chriſtian that is prevalent and potent with GOD, (that ſeekes to him) he is able to do more then all the riches in the world, they ſet the divell a worke; but prayer ſets *God* a worke, it ſets him a worke to doe vs good; and to heale vs, and to deliver vs out of extremities, and therefore, I ſay, for our owne ſakes, even out of ſelfe-loue, and for common comforts, you haue need to vſe this. Certainely, if theſe things were beleeved, (but you heare them, you giue vs the hearing for the time; but if they were beleeved,) many would be more frequent in this duty, they would not be ſo negligent in it, or come in ſo careleſſe a manner to it.

4 *Mot.* Beſides this, I beſeech you to conſider this, every man deſires joy, and comfort, & commonly one thing that keepes vs off from this duty, is ſports and pleaſures, one thing or other, that we take delight in, which dampe and hinder vs in theſe things, in ſpirituall performances; Prayer is the beſt way of all other to fill thy heart with joy, as we ſee in *Ioh.* 16.24. he ſaith there, *In my name you haue asked nothing hitherto, but now aske, that your ioy may bee full.* This is one motiue that *Chriſt* vſeth to exhort vs to bee frequent in this duty, that our joy may be full: that I take to be the meaning of that of *Iames.* 5. *If any man be ſad, let him pray*; not onely becauſe prayer is ſutable to ſuch a diſpoſition, but likewiſe it will cheere him vp, it is the way to get comfort, *if any bee ſad, let him pray.* So it is in *Phil.* 4. 6. *In all things make your requeſts knowne; and the peace of God ſhall keepe*

Ioh. 16. 24.

Iames. 5. 13.

Phil. 4. 6.

keepe you in the Communion of Ieſus Chriſt. That is it, that brings peace, and quietneſſe; and therefore there is much reaſon, why we ſhould be conſtant in this duty, it is that which quickens vs, it is that which fills vs with joy, and comfort, and with peace, which is that that every one deſires.

5. *Mot.* Moreover, conſider it is thy buckler, prayer is the helmet that keeps thee ſafe; when a man neglects it, when he ceaſeth to goe to *God* by prayer, when he once ſhewes himſelfe to be a ſtranger to the *Lord* by neglecting this duty, then he is out of the pales of his protection, like the conies that goe out of their burrowes: for ſo is the *Lord* to thoſe that pray, the *Lord* is a protection to thoſe that call vpon his name. The very calling vpon his name is a running vnder *Gods* wings, as it were, that is, a putting our ſelues vnder his ſhadow; but when thou neglecteſt that, thou wandreſt abroad from him. Now doe we not neede protection from outward dangers, from day to day? doe we not need to be kept from the inward danger of ſinne and temptation? ſurely prayer is one part of the *ſpirituall Armor*, as we ſee *Eph.*6 In Eph. 6. the *compleat armour of God*, *prayer* is reckoned vp the laſt, as that that buckles vp all the reſt, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Continue in prayer, and watch to it with perſeverance.* And you haue the more reaſon to doe it, becauſe it is not only a part of this armor, but it enables you to vſe all the reſt, to vſe the word, & to vſe faith: for prayer ſtirs them vp all. What is it to haue Armour, and not to haue it ready? now prayer makes it ready. Therfore you

Mat: 26: 41

see Christ prescribes the same rule in *Mat.* 26. 41 *Pray that yee enter not into temptation*, as if that were the way to secure vs, and to shelter vs, and to keepe vs safe from falling into temptation. It is a thing I would advise you to, to pray, and to seeke to the LORD continually. Therefore, if we should vse onely this reason to you, to be constant in this duty, because it is for your safety, it were sufficient. You know when a man is *as a Citty whose walls are broken downe*, when hee lyes exposed to temptation, he is in a dangerous case. So I may vse this *Dilema* to you, if you haue a disposition, if you thinke thus, I hope I am well enough; I hope my heart is in a temper good enough, I am not now exposed to any temptation, I feare nothing, make this argument against thy selfe; why doe I neglect so good a gale, if my heart be so well disposed to pray, why doe I then omit it? Againe, if there be any indisposition in me, why doe I hazard my selfe? what if Sathan should set vpon thee? what if the world should set vpon thee? what if a sutable temptation agreeable to thy lusts be offered? art thou not in danger? and therefore a constant course should be kept in it, wee should take heed of being negligent in it. And will a man now professe that he hopes he is the servant of GOD, and in a good estate, although he do not pray so much as others, (we speak not of frequency simply, but of such a performance as is required) I say, to professe that thou art a servant of Christ, and that thou loveſt him, and that hee is thy husband, and that thou art

Note this.

art his ſervant, and yet thou calleſt not vpon him from day to day, this is an idle thing, it is impoſſible; if thou didſt loue him, thou wouldeſt expreſſe thy ſelfe in calling vpon his name. Shall a friend that is but an acquaintance to vs, in whom wee delight, come to vs, and wee are willing to ſpend many houres with him, and ſhall we profeſſe our ſelues to be friends of GOD, and him to be a friend vs, and that we delight in him, and yet neglect this duty? this is a common thing amongſt you, when you ſee a man that meditates all his matters himſelfe, or if hee doe open his minde, and tell them to ſome body elſe, it muſt bee ſuch a one as profeſſeth to bee a friend to him; now if this friend ſhould never heare from him, nor hee ſhould never ſpeake to him, or if hee doe, it is in ſuch a negligent manner, as it may appeare, hee doth not truſt him, hee doth not regard what hee can doe for him, and hee doth it ſo ſhortly, that hee can ſcarcely tell what the buſineſſe is, I ſay, in ſuch a caſe, would you not reckon his profeſſion of friendſhip to bee an idle, and empty profeſſion? now apply it to thy ſelfe, thoſe that ſay they haue communion with GOD, and they hope their eſtate is good enough, they ſtand in good tearmes with him, but yet, if they be in any neceſſity, for all the matters and occaſions that fall out from day to day, either they thinke of them in themſelues, or they are apt enough to declare them to man, or if they goe to GOD, they doe it negligently, they poſt over the matter, ſo as they haue

haue ſcarce leiſure to expreſſe themſelues and their doings; doe you thinke hee will take ſuch for friends? and doe you thinke, that this is a true, ſound and hearty profeſſion? Therefore (to end this) I beſeech you conſider it, and take heede of being remiſſe, and negligent in it, you ſee it is a command from the *Lord*, ***Pray continually.***

And ſo much for this time.

FINIS.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON.

THE FIRST SERMON.

1 THESS. 5. 17.

Pray continually.

NOt to repeate what hath beene delivered, but to presse this point on vs a little further (for what is more necessary, then that wee should keepe a constant course in this duty, since the very life of Religion consists in it?) I adde this to all I pressed in the morning, that if you do neglect it, it exposeth you to great disadvantage, both for the outward man, and for the inward man, and there are but these two that you neede to care for.

Mot. 6. The omission of it doth disadvantage men.

For

1 In the outvvard man.

For the outward man, it depriues you of the bleſſing; put the caſe, you haue never ſo good ſucceſſe in your enterprizes; put the caſe you haue outward comforts in abundance, yet ſtill the bleſſing is wanting; and not onely ſo, but it vncovers the roofe, as it were, and the curſe is rained downe vpon your tables, vpon your meat and drinke, vpon all the endeavours, and all the enterprizes you take in hand. Wee conſider not what we doe, when wee neglect this duty, what dangers wee expoſe our ſelues vnto from day to day: for it is one thing to haue outward comforts, and another thing to haue the bleſſing with them.

2 In the invvard man.

Beſides conſider what loſſe you ſuffer in the inward man, when you neglect this duty at any time: for that is ready to bee diſtempered, and to goe out of order; it is ready to contract hardneſſe, to contract ſoile; ſpirituall grace is ready to decay. It falls out with mans heart, as it doth with a garden that is neglected; it will quickly be overcome with weedes, if you looke not diligently to it, and the way to looke to it is conſtancy in this duty. That is a notable place, *Iob.* 15 4. when *Eliphaz* obſerved ſome diſtemper in *Iobs* affections (as he apprehended it) he tells him that the ſpeech hee vſed was not comely, but vaine, and ſinfull, and what then? *ſurely Iob* (ſaith hee) *thou refraineſt prayer from the Lord*, as if hee ſhould ſay, it is impoſſible, *Iob*, that thou ſhouldeſt fall into theſe diſtempers, if thou diddeſt keepe thy courſe conſtantly in this duty, there-

Iob. 15. 4.

fore

fore ſurely, ſaith he, thou reſtraineſt prayer from the *Lord*; So it is with vs, let vs reſtraine prayer from GOD, and diſtempers will ariſe quickly in our ſpirits, worldly mindedneſſe will bee ready to grow vpon vs, wee ſhall bee apt to bee carnall, we ſhall forget GOD, and forget our ſelues, and forget the good purpoſes, and deſires wee had; and therefore, that you may keepe your hearts in order, you muſt keepe a conſtant courſe in this duty: for if you doe, (though your peace be interrupted) this will repaire it againe, it will make vp the breaches againe; though there bee ſome diſtempered affections, that grow vpon vs, yet prayer will compoſe all. As ſleepe compoſeth drunkenneſſe; ſo prayer will compoſe the affections, a man may pray himſelfe ſober againe, nothing doth it ſooner, nothing doth it more effectually; and this you ſhall finde, that as you, either omit it, or ſleight it ouer; ſo you ſhall finde a proportionable weakeneſſe growing upon the inward man, as the body feeles, when it neglecteth either ſleepe, or diet, or exerciſe: therefore, to end this exhortation, let vs bee conſtant in it. *Simile.*

Onely remember this (when wee exhort you thus to keepe a conſtant courſe, for which you heard ſo many reaſons in the morning, I ſay, remember this caution) that if it be performed in a formall, or in a cuſtomary, and overly manner, you were as good to omit it altogether: for the LORD takes not our prayers by number, but by waight: when it is an outward picture, a dead carcaſſe *Note.*

carcasse of prayer, when there is no life, no fervencie in it, heee regards it not, be not deceived in this, it is a very vsuall deceit, it may bee a mans conscience would bee vpon him, if hee should omit it altogether, and therefore when hee doth something, his heart is satisfied, and so hee growes worse and worse; therefore, consider, that the very doing of the dutie, is not that which the LORD heedes, but hee will haue it so performed; that the end may bee obtained, and that the thing may be effected, for which you pray. If a man send his servant to goe to such a place, it is not his going to and fro that he regards, but hee would haue him to dispatch the businesse; so in all other workes, hee cares not for the formalitie of performance, but would haue the thing so done, that it may bee of vse to him; if you set a servant to make a fire for you, and he goe, and lay some greene wood together, and perhaps put a few coales vnder, this is not to make a fire for you, but he must, either get dry wood, or he must blow till it burne, and be fit for vse; so when your hearts are vnfit, when they are like greene wood, when you come to warme them, and to quicken them by prayer to GOD, it may be you post over this duty, and leaue your hearts as cold, and as distempered as they were before: My *Beloved*, this is not to performe this dutie. This dutie is effectually performed, when your hearts are wrought vpon by it, & when they are brought to a better tune, and to a better temper then they were before. If you finde

Simile.

Simile.

sinfull

ſinnefull luſts, there your buſineſſe is to worke them out by prayer, to reaſon the matter, to expoſtulate the thing before the LORD, and not to giue over, till you haue ſet all the wheeles of your ſoule right, till you haue made your hearts perfect with GOD; and if you finde your hearts too much cleaving to the world, you muſt weane them, and take them off; if you finde a deadneſſe, and vnaptnes, and indiſpoſition in you, you muſt lift vp your ſoules to the *Lord*, and not giue over till you bee quickened, and this is to performe the dutie in ſuch a manner as the *Lord* accepts; otherwiſe it is an hypocriticall performance: for this is hypocriſie, when a man is not willing to let the dutie goe altogether, nor yet is willing to performe it fervently, and in a quicke, and zealous manner: for hee that omits it altogether is a profane perſon; and hee that performes it zealouſly, and to purpoſe, is a holy man: but an hypocrite goes betweene both, hee would doe ſomething at it, but hee will not doe it throughly. And thetefore, if thou finde that thou haſt ſlubbered over this dutie from day to day, that thou performeſt it in a negligent manner, and perfunctorily, know that it is an hypocriticall perfórmance; and therefore when we ſpend ſo much time in exhorting you to a conſtant courſe in this dutie, ſtill remember, that you muſt performe it in ſuch a manner, that it may haue heate, and life in it, that it may be acceptable to GOD, and doe good to your owne hearts, to bring them to a more holy frame of grace,

Hypocriſie what.

grace, and to a better temper, then, it may bee you found them in, when you went about the dutie.

1 *Obiect.* And if you obiect now, I, but it will coſt vs much time to doe this?

Anſw. Threefold. Indeed, one common cauſe, among all the reſt, that keepes vs off from the thorow performance of this duty, is this: but, (to ſpeake to that in a word) remember this, that the time that is ſpent in calling vpon *God*, hinders you not in your buſineſſe, though it ſeeme to hinder you, and though it takes ſo much from the heape, yet indeed it increaſeth the heape, as it is ſaid of tithes and offerings, ***bring them in***, and thinke not, that becauſe you leſſen the heape, that you are poorer men, no, ſaith the ***Lord***, it wi l increaſe your ſtore, ***I will open the windowes of heaven***, and you ſhall haue ſo much the more for it; ſo it is true in this caſe. In other things you ſee it well enough. You know, the baiting of the horſe, hinders not the journey, and the oyling of the wheele, and the whetting of the ſithe, though there be a ſtop in the worke for a time, yet, as our common ſaying is, a whet is no let, and the doing of this is no impediment.

1. Anſw.

Mal. 3.

Simile.

Anſw. 2. Secondly, put the caſe it were, yet is it not the greater buſineſſe? what is it that you get by all your labours, and travailes? if it be riches, it comes not into any compariſon with grace, and holineſſe, with that riches wherewith prayer makes you rich. But, ſay it be ſomewhat more noble then that, as learning, and knowledge; yet,

what

what is that to the renewing of GOD s image in vs? were it not better to ſpend time to get grace to make vs *rich to God*; to make vs to get ſtrength in the inward man, to paſſe through all varieties of affictions, in getting that which is the chiefeſt excellencie of all others: for is not that the beſt excellencie? When *Adam* was in *Paradiſe*, the having of *Gods Image*, you know, it excelled all other excellencies in the world, and ſo it doth ſtill, and the more you pray, the more you get of this image: for a man of much prayer is alwayes a man of much grace, it much increaſeth thoſe ſpirituall gifts, which are better then all the outward things you can get by your imploiment and diligence in them: therefore, I ſay, though it doe ſpend you much time; yet know (as *Chriſt* ſaid to *Mary*) he that prayes much, though he be a great looſer in other things, yet he *chooſeth the better part.*

Laſt of all conſider this, when thou commeſt to offer ſacrifice to GOD, wouldeſt thou offer that which coſt thee nothing? if thy continuing in prayer, and ſpending much time in it ſhould coſt thee ſome diſadvantage in thy affaires, and ſhould looſe thee that which another gaines, that thou getteſt not ſo much knowledge, as another man doth, thou doſt not ſo much in thy trade, in thy buſineſſe, thou doeſt not ſet things in order, as thou mighteſt haue done; yet know this, that it is great wiſedome to make our ſervice to *God* coſtly to vs; you know, *Davids* choiſe: *Shall I offer to the Lord that which coſt me nothing*, and therefore 3. *Anſ.*

he would needes giue the worth to *Auraunah* the *Iebuſite* for that which he bought; and therefore ſince it is to a good maſter, that ſees what you doe, that knowes what it coſteth, and what loſſe you are at, and withall, that is willing and able to recompence it, why ſhould you ſhorten this buſineſſe, and poſt it over, becauſe of other occaſions, and other buſineſſe that you haue to doe?

Obiect. 1. Oh, but, a man will ſay further, I am willing to doe it, but I am vnfit for it, and it may be the longer I ſtriue, the more vnfit I grow.

Anſw. 1. To this I anſwer, firſt, in generall, if thou doe it as well as thou canſt, though thou doe it not ſo well as thou wouldeſt, in this caſe, GOD *accepts the will for the deede*, when a man puts his ſtrength to it, when there is no indiligence in him, when there is no lazineſſe, (for in that caſe he will not accept the will for the deede, but) when a man doth his vtmoſt, as thoſe that would haue given more, and could not, their will was accepted for the deede, in 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. I ſay, when thou doeſt what thou canſt, when thou ſpareſt no labour to get thy heart vpon the wing, to raiſe and quicken it, and to inlarge it in this dutie: there GOD accepts it.

2 Cor. 8, 12, 13

Anſw. 2. But againe, I adde further, there is an vnskilfulneſſe in going about this dutie: many times when we are not fit, we thinke to make our ſelues fitter, by ſpending time in thoughts, and meditations before, which I denie not but they may be profitable, but yet this I will propound to you that

that the beſt way to fit our ſelues to this duty, when we finde an indiſpoſition vnto it, is, not to ſtay till wee haue prepared our ſelues by meditation, but to fall preſently vpon the dutie, (I will giue you the reaſon of it) becauſe, though a preparation is required for the performance of every ſpirituall duty, yet, the remote preparation is that which is intended, and meant, when we ſay we muſt prepare: for, if we ſpeake of that which is immediate, the very doing of the dutie is the firſt preparation to it. For example, if a man were to runne a race, if he were to doe any bodily exerciſe, there muſt be ſtrength of bodie, he muſt be fed well, that he may haue ability, but the vſe of the very exerciſe it ſelfe; the very particular act, that is of the ſame kind with the exerciſe, is the beſt to fit him for it; ſo in this duty of prayer, it is true, to be *ſtrong in the inward man*, to haue much knowledge, to haue much grace, makes a man able, and fit for the dutie; but, if you ſpeake of the immediate preparation for it, I ſay, the beſt way to prepare vs, is the very dutie it ſelfe; as all actions, of the ſame kinde, increaſe the habits, ſo prayer makes vs fit for prayer; and that is a rule, *the way to godlineſſe is in the compaſſe of godlineſſe it ſelfe*; that is, the way to grow in any grace is the exerciſe of that grace.

How to fit a mans ſelfe to prayer.

Simile.

Note.

It is a point that *Luther* preſſed, and hee preſſed it out of his owne experience, and this reaſon he vſeth; in this caſe, ſaith he, when a man goes about to fit himſelfe, by working on his owne thoughts, now he goes about to overcome

Note this expreſſion of Luther.

himselfe by his owne strength, and to contend with Sathan alone, but when a man feeleth an indisposition, and goes to *God* by prayer, & rests on *God* to fit him, hee takes *Gods* strength to oppose the indisposition, and deadnesse of his flesh, & the temptations of Sathan, that hinder him, and resist him. Therefore you shall find this to be the best way to fit your selues for prayer, namely, to performe the duty. If you seeke to expedite, and devolue your selues out of your vnfitnes, by the working of your owne thoughts, commonly, you involue your selues farther into those labyrinths, and are caught more and more. But this I speake by the way concerning matters of vnfitnesse. The maine answer to this objection, is that, which I gaue you before, that if a man doe what he can, and do it faithfully, and in sincerity, that indisposition shall not hinder him, but still remember, it must bee done, it is not an excuse to vs, at any time, nor ought to be, that we should omit the duty wholly, vnder pretence of an vnfitnesse.

3 *Obiect.* Thirdly, a man is readie to say againe, but I find many difficulties, how shall I doe to remoue them?

Answ. 7 Impediments in prayer, that makes it difficult. The best way hereunto, is the very naming of the difficulties to you, that you may know them, and make account of them; therefore you must consider this in generall, that, indeede, it is not an easie thing to call vpon GOD constantly: our misprision of the dutie, our reckoning of it, that it is a more facile, and easie thing, then it is, makes vs more to slight it, and causeth

vs not to goe about it with that intention, which otherwiſe wee would; but conſider a little what it is. The dutie is very ſpirituall, and our hearts are carnall, and it is no eaſie thing to bring ſpirituall duties, and carnall hearts together. 1 *Note this.*

Beſides, our natures are very backward to come into the *Lords* preſence, partly by reaſon of his great glory, by reaſon of his Majeſtie, who *dwells in light vnacceſſible*, and our weake eyes are apt to bee dazled with it, and partly out of an accuſtomednesſe, we are not vſed to it, and therefore we are ready to fly from him, as beaſts that are wild, and are not tamed to our hands, are ready to fly from vs, ſo backward is our nature to come into his preſence. 2 *Simile.*

Again, the varietie of occaſions hinders vs, every thing keepes vs back; if a mans heart be cheerfull, it is apt to delight in other things; if a mans heart bee ſad, on the other ſide; if it bee a ſlight ſadnes, men are ready to driue it away with company, and with ſports, and with doing other things; and if the ſadneſſe be great, we are ſwallowed vp with anguiſh of ſpirit, and then any thing is eaſier then to pray, as you may ſee by *Iudas*, it was eaſier for him to diſpath himſelfe, then to goe and call vpon GOD; ſo it is with men, when they haue exceſſiue griefe, when their anguiſh of heart is exceeding great: ſo that, whether a man hath a cheerefull diſpoſition, or a ſad, whether the ſadneſſe be great or ſmall, ſtill you ſhal finde a difficultie. If we be idle, and haue 3

nothing to doe, our hearts will be poſſeſt with vaine thoughts, and, if we be full of buſineſſe, that diſtracts vs alſo, and indiſpoſeth vs, on the other ſide: ſo ſtill there are impediments.

4 But there is one great impediment, among the reſt, and moſt common, which is worldly cares, and worldly-mindedneſſe; worldly cares hinder ſpirituall prayer, and ſpirituall conference, and the holy performance, almoſt, of every duty; and therefore if you finde a difficultie in it, looke narrowly, if that be not the cauſe.

5. Againe, another great cauſe of this difficultie in prayer, of ſuch backwardneſſe to it, of ſuch indiſpoſition to it, is, becauſe we doe not well conſider the nature of *God*, we want faith in his power, and in his providence, we doe not conſider, that he hath that diſpoſing hand, which he hath in every thing, that belongs to vs, in health, in ſickneſſe, in povertie, in riches, in good ſucceſſe, and ill ſucceſſe: for, if we did ſee the providence of *God*, and acknowledge it more, we ſhould be ready to call vpon him, but this want of faith in his providence, that the LORD is not ſeene in his greatneſſe, and in his mighty power, this cauſeth men to be backward to ſeek to him, but very forward to ſeek to the creatures. When we haue any thing to do, of any conſequence, we are ready to poſt from this man to that man, and from this meanes to that meanes, but very backward, and negligent to goe to GOD, in prayer, to haue the thing brought to paſſe, that wee deſire, and this ariſeth from want of faith, and from ignorance

norance of GOD, and our not conſideration of him.

Beſides, Sathan hinders vs exceedingly in this duty; for he knowes of what moment it is, and of what conſequence, and therefore hee doth as the *Aramites* did, hee *fights not againſt ſmall no great, but againſt the King*, he knowes it is this duty which quickens every grace, it is the greateſt enemy, which he hath, and if he can keepe vs from prayer, hee hath the vpper hand of vs, hee hath wreſted the weapon out of our hands, hee hath diſarmed vs, as it were, and then hee may doe what he will with vs. 6 1 King. 22, 31.

Likewiſe the ſins we commit, eſpecially groſſe ſinnes, they are a great hinderance to this duty, and keepe from the ſpirituall, and cheerefull performance of it: for ſinne wounds the conſcience, it disjoynteth, and diſmembers the ſoule, and a disjoynted member, you know, is vnfit to doe any buſineſſe; yea when the ſinne is healed, and forgiven, yet there is a ſoreneſſe left in the heart, though ſome aſſurance of pardon ſhould follow, vpon the commiſſion of a great ſinne, ſo that, that is another impediment. I muſt not ſtand to reckon vp many, we ſhall find enough by continuall experience. 7

Onely this vſe we muſt make of it, that, if the impediments bee ſo many, and the difficulties that keepe vs from a conſtant courſe in prayer, and from the performance of it to purpoſe, ſo great, then we muſt put on a reſolution to break through all, and lay it, as an inviolable law vpon *Vſe.* What courſe is to be taken againſt theſe impediments.

our selues, that wee will not alter. Let vs thinke with our selues that the thing is difficult, and will cost all the care, and all the intention that may be; yea, when thou hast overcome the difficulties at one time, it may be, the next day, thou shalt meet with new conflicts, new distempers, new affections, new strength of lusts, & a new disposition of mind will be on them; and therefore hee that will bee constant in this dutie, must put on a strong resolution; as it was the saying of a holy man, one of the holiest men, that these latter times had, that he never went to pray to GOD, but he found so many impediments, that except he bound himselfe by an vnalterable resolution, that hee resolved not to breake vpon any occasion, he could never haue kept a constant course in it, or, if he had, hee should never haue kept himselfe from a formal, customary performance of it. But I will adde no more, to presse this vpon you, there hath beene enough said, I beseech you consider it.

Note this vvell

Now that which I promised in the morning to doe, which is, that, that doth exceedingly strengthen vs to the performance of this dutie of calling vpon GOD, of *praying continually*, (which we are here commanded to doe) is to remooue certaine objections, which are in the mindes of men, that secretly weaken the estimation of this truth, and insensibly takes vs off, when we marke them not: for, beloved, when we are so negligent in it, surely there is something that is the cause of it, and if wee could finde the cause,

and

and remooue it, wee could not ſpend an houre better.

The objections, that are commonly in the hearts of men, are many, I will name to you but theſe foure briefly. 4. Obiections againſt prayer.

Firſt, a man is ready to ſay, what need I ſpend ſo much time, and bee ſo large in the expreſſion of my wants to GOD, when he knowes them? I cannot make them better knowne to him, hee knowes them well enough already, and therefore what needeth it? 1 *Obiect.*

To this I anſwer (in a word, becauſe it is an obiection that hath not much weight in it) that it is true; the LORD knowes thy wants, but withall, he will haue thee to know them; becauſe, otherwiſe, thou wilt not ſeeke to him, thou wilt not ſet a price vpon the things, that hee beſtowes on thee, thou wilt not be thankefull to him, when he hath granted them, and therefore you ſhall finde, our Saviour Chriſt vſeth this very argument, as a meanes to quicken vs to prayer, ſaying, *Your heavenly Father knowes what you haue needeof*; what then? ſhall we not therefore pray? yes, ſaith he, therefore pray ye the more earneſtly, and the more importunately to him: for ſince he knowes your wants, he will be more ready to heare your requeſts. *Anſw.* Mat. 6.

I, but it will be ſaid againe, that hee doth not only know them, but he alſo means, & purpoſeth to beſtow them: for hee hath made a promiſe to vs, and his promiſe is firme, and ſure, and *God* is juſt, and muſt keepe his promiſe, and when he hath 2 *Obiect.*

hath fully purpoſed it, what needs ſo much praying to bring it to paſſe?

Anſw. 1. I anſwer, the promiſes of *God* are to be vnderſtood with this ſecret condition annexed, I will doe ſuch and ſuch a thing for you, if you pray, though it be not expreſſed: and therefore, wee ſee when *God* promiſed things in particular, yet ſtill they prayed, and prayed earneſtly. When he promiſed *Eliah* that it ſhould raine, yet, wee ſee, he prayed and contended much in his prayer; when hee made a promiſe to *David*, that hee would *make him an houſe*, yet you know, *David* went to the houſe of the LORD, and ſate before him, and made earneſt prayer, as is recorded in the 2. of *Sam.* So *Daniel* had a particular promiſe, and yet he prayed, and prayed long. The example of our Saviour *Chriſt* is without exception, who had all the promiſes ſure to him, yet, you ſee, *hee prayed*, yea, *he ſpent whole nights in prayer*, and therfore, you muſt ſo vnderſtand it, that though you haue a promiſe made, though the thing be never ſo ſure to you; yet it is to bee vnderſtood with that, if you call vpon *God*.

1 King: 18. 41, 42.

2 Sam. 7. 11. 2 ſam 7. 18.

Dan 9.

Anſw. 2. And why the LORD would haue you doe it, I ſhewed you many reaſons in the morning, wee will adde this to it. What, if the LORD will haue thee call vpon him, though hee purpoſe to doe the thing, even for this end, that thou maiſt worſhip him? for, what is it to worſhip the LORD? you ſhall finde this vſuall in the olde Teſtament, *The people bowed themſelues and worſhipped*, or *they fell vpon their faces and worſhipped*. The meaning

To worſhip God, vvhat.

is

is this, to worship *God* is nothing else, but to acknowledge the worthinesse that is in him. As when you doe worship to a man, you doe vse so much outward demeanour and obseruance to him, as may acknowledge a worth in him aboue another man: outward gesture, that is the outward worshipping of *God*, the inward worship is inwardly to acknowledge his attributes. Now, you shall see, prayer giues an acknowledgement of his attributes most of any thing: for hee that prayes to *God*, he doth, in so doing, acknowledge his omnipresence, and his omniscience; that hee heares that, which the Idols of the *Gentiles* could not doe; that hee knowes the secrets of mens hearts, that neither men, nor Angels can doe.

Againe, it acknowledgeth his Almighty power, that hee is able to doe any thing; for that is presuppos'd, when wee come, and seeke to him.

Againe, it acknowledgeth his mercie, and his goodnes; that he is not onely able, but exceeding willing to helpe.

Againe, it acknowledgeth his truth, that as he hath promised, so, I make account, he will performe it, when I goe, and seeke to him; in a word, all the attributes of God are acknowledged in prayer. Therefore therein you worship him in a speciall manner, when you goe, and seeke to him, and pray to him, in so doing, you acknowledge him, yea you acknowledge him to be a *Lord*, and a father; as, when we see a childe run to a man, and aske him blessing, when we see him aske him

foode,

foode, and rayment, wee say, surely such a man is his father; so this very praying to *God*, is a worshipping of him, because it acknowledgeth his attributes, and his relation to vs, and ours to him.

3 *Obiect.* But againe, thirdly, it will bee objected, I but, alas, what can the endeavours or the prayers of a weake man doe? can they change the purpose of Almighty GOD, if hee doe not intend to doe this thing for me, shall I hope to alter him?

Answ. For answere to this, I say this, in briefe, that when you doe call vpon GOD, hee is not changed by your prayers, but the change is wrought in you, as we haue said to you heretofore, when a Physitian is sought vnto by his patient, the patient desires him earnestly to giue him such a cordiall, and such restoratiue Physicke, that is pleasing to him; the Physitian denies him long, yet in the end, he yeelds vnto it. Why? not because there is any change in the Physitian, but because there is a change in the patient, hee is now fitted for this, before hee was not: so then the Phisitian yeelds now, whereas before hee refused, and yet the change is in the patient, and not in the physitian; and therefore, beloved, when you goe about to striue with *God* in prayer, when you contend, and wrastle with him, (for so we ought to doe) when you vse many reasons to perswade him, you alter not him, but your selues: for those arguments that you vse, are not so much to perswade him to helpe you,

Simile.

you, as to perſwade your hearts to more faith, to more loue, to more obedience, to more humilitie, and thankfulneſſe, and that indeede is the reaſon, why prayer prevailes with GOD, not that the very ſending vp is that, that prevailes with him, but becauſe a faithfull, and a ſpirituall prayer puts the heart in a better diſpoſition, ſo that a man is now made readie to receiue a bleſſing at Gods hands, that before hee was not, So that, when you thinke you draw God to you, with your arguments, in truth, you draw your ſelues neerer to him; as when a man in a ſhip pluckes a rocke, it ſeemeth as if hee plucked the rocke neerer to the ſhippe, when as the ſhippe is plucked neerer to the rocke: ſo, I ſay, we draw our ſelues neerer to the *Lord*, and when wee draw neerer to the *Lord*, in prayer, and there is a ſpirituall diſpoſition wrought in our hearts, by the exerciſe of this dutie, then indeede the *Lord* drawes neere to vs, to ſend vs helpe, and to grant our requeſts, that wee put vp to him, and therefore, that you ſhould marke by the way, that any prayer, as it hath a higher pitch of holineſſe in affection, and as it hath ſtronger arguments in it; ſo it is a better prayer; not becauſe this prayer ſhall prevaile with God more, or, that the excellencie of this prayer ſhould mooue him, but becauſe this pitch of holie affection, and ſtrength of argument workes vpon your hearts: for the ſtrength of arguments mooues your vnderſtanding, and the holineſſe of affection puts your will in a frame, *Simile.*

frame, and ſo diſpoſeth your hearts, and fits you, as the patient, we ſpake of before, is fitted, when the Phyſitian is willing to giue the thing hee deſired.

Obiect. 4. Tvvofold.

But the laſt objection, which indeede is more then all the reſt, is this.

1

A man is ready to ſay, wee ſee there are many men, that doe not call vpon GOD, and yet enjoy many mercies: it may bee, a man can ſay with himſelfe, when hee did not vſe to pray, hee had health, and ſleepe, and protection?

2

Againe, on the other ſide, he hath prayed for ſuch and ſuch things, and yet they haue not been granted? ſo this objection hath two parts, that a man hath obtained bleſſings, without prayer, and againe he hath prayed, and yet hath not obtained the bleſſings he ſought for, at the LORDS hands.

Anſw.

For anſwer to the firſt, that men doe obtaine many bleſſings that doe not pray, (as how many young men are there, and olde men too, that haue health, and wealth, and peace, and libertie, and abundance of all things, and yet, either they ſeeke not to GOD, or, if they doe, yet not in a holy and ſpirituall manner) and therefore this objection had need to be anſwered; and therefore I anſwer briefly.

1 Anſvver to the firſt part of the obiection.

Anſw. 1.

Firſt, though they haue theſe bleſſings, yet they haue them vncertainly, they haue no promiſe of them, they cannot build vpon them, whereas they are ſure mercies to the righteous man, he can build vpon theſe bleſſings: for he hath

hath a father to goe to, whoſe loue he knowes, and hee hath ſure promiſes to build on; the other, though he hath them, yet hee is in a ſlipperie place, when hee enjoyes them; it is an accidentall thing, hee hath them from the hand of an enemie, and he knowes not how long he ſhall enjoy them.

Anſw. 2. Difference betweene having of bleſſings through the providence of God, and from the loue of God.

But I anſwer again, (which is the chiefe anſwer to this objection) that there is a great deale of difference betweene having bleſſings, through the providence of GOD, and betweene having them from the mercie of GOD, and by vertue of his promiſe, and out of his loue to vs in *Chriſt Ieſus*. A naturall man may haue many bleſſings of *God*, (ſo *God* ſaid that he made *Ieroboam* a King, he gaue him a Kingdome; and many ſuch paſſages we ſhall finde, when men come vnjuſtly to them, as he did to the Kingdome, yet *God*, ſaith he, did it, that is, it was by his providence) and yet he hath them not in mercie: for if thou haſt theſe bleſſings, health, and ſleepe, and ſucceſſe in the enterpriſes, from day to day, & yet thy heart tells thee within, that thou haſt not ſought them at the *Lords* hands, as thou oughteſt, I ſay to ſuch a man, (and marke it) it were better for him that hee ſhould want them: for certainely, when hee hath them, in this manner, he hath them without a bleſſing; yea he hath them with a curſe, and ſo had better to be without them, as it had been better for *Ahab* to haue beene without his vineyard, and as it had beene better for *Gehezi* to haue gone without his reward, that hee had of *Naaman*

man the *Aſſyrian*, (for you know hee had the leproſie with it) it had beene better for the children of *Iſrael* to haue gone without their *quailes*; for you know the curſe that folowed, death went along with them; ſo when a man ſhall haue peace and proſperitie, and abundance of all things, without ſeeking them at the *Lords* hands, from day to day, I ſay, he were better to haue wanted them; for there goes death together with them. It is ſaid plainely, that *eaſe ſlayeth the foolish*, (that is to ſay) this very proſperity, this thriving, (notwithſtanding a neglecting of prayer, and of holy duties) I ſay, it carries death along with it, as the obtaining of the vineyard, brought death to *Achab*, the getting of the Kingdome was the deſtruction of *Ieroboam*; and therefore men haue little cauſe to comfort themſelues with this, that they enjoy many bleſſings, and never pray for them.

3. *Anſw.* But, to anſwer this point more fully, I ſay many bleſſings are beſtowed vpon men, not for their owne ſakes, but for the Churches ſake. A man may haue ſtrength of body, hee may haue great gifts of mind, he may haue great ſucceſſe in vſing thoſe gifts, he may bring great enterprizes to paſſe, ſo that you may truely ſay, the hand of God is with him; all this may be done, not for his ſake, but for the ſake of the Church, and glory of God ſome other way, that hee might doe ſome ſervice; as you ſee, it is plainely ſaid of *Cyrus*, *Iſa.45.4.* ſpeaking there of *Cyrus*, ſaith the *Lord* there, *For Iacob my ſervants ſake, and for Iſ-*

Iſay 45.4.

rael

rael mine elect ſake I haue called thee by name, and haue given thee this great power, and all this great ſucceſſe, although thou thy ſelfe haue not knowne mee. (Marke) *Cyrus* was a moſt proſperous man, *Gods* hand was mightie with him, and yet all this was not for his owne ſake, but for the Churches ſake: ſo you may thinke it is, when men proſper, many times, it is not for their owne ſakes, but to fulfill ſome other end of *Gods* providence; and therefore, marke this and keepe it for a rule, if thou proſper in thy enterprizes, if thou enjoy wealth, and peace, and abundance of all things, and know that thou doeſt not ſeeke to *God*, from day to day, that thou keepeſt not thy heart right and ſtrait, and perfect before him, thou doeſt not call vpon him, in a holy, and ſpirituall manner, certainely it is for one of thoſe cauſes, thou haſt it without a bleſſing, and with a curſe, thou haſt it for other ends, and not for good to thy ſelfe; and therefore thou haſt it very vncertainely, it may be tooke from thee, thou knoweſt not how ſoone; yea, and this thou ſhalt bee ſure of, that it ſhall be taken from thee then, when, of all other times, it will be vnfitteſt for thee: as a theefe comes at a time, when men leaſt looke for him; ſo deſtruction comes ſuddenly vpon theſe men; *God* cuts them as a man, when hee would haue trees to die, hee loppes them in that ſeaſon, that of all others is the vnfitteſt, when the ſappe is in the tree, when the lopping will cauſe them to wither, ſo the LORD will ſtrike them in ſuch a ſea-

Note this.

Simile.

ſon. It is quite contrary with the Saints, he cuts them in due ſeaſon, hee lopps them in due time, that they may grow the better for it, it is good for them.

Anſvver to the 2. part of the obiection.

But now for the other part of the objection it may be, many among you now are ready to ſay, I haue prayed for ſuch and ſuch things, and I haue beene earneſt, and yet the LORD hath denied mee: my Beloved, if wee can ſatiſfie this objection, we ſhall then take this impediment away, that wee propound in this objection, that hath theſe two parts. Therefore to this I anſwer.

Anſw. 1. Our prayers oft times are amiſſe in one of theſe three reſpects.

First, in reſpect of the principle whence they flow, vvhen they are but naturall deſires.

First, if thou haſt not beene heard in thy prayer, conſider, if thou haſt not prayed amiſſe; it is a common fault among vs, when wee haue ſpent much time in prayer, and, it may be, wee haue ſpent time in faſting, and praying, and the thing is not granted; wee preſently lay it vpon the LORD, that hee hath not heard, when many times, the cauſe is in our not praying, as wee ought, it may bee thou haſt beene very earneſt, and therefore thou hopeſt thou haſt done very well: I tell thee, thou maiſt be very earneſt, and importunate with the LORD, when it may be no more but a naturall deſire, when a man hath neede to be directed in a difficult caſe, that much concernes him; when he hath neede to be extricated, and taken out of ſuch a difficultie, and ſtrait, wherein he is involved, when he hath need of ſucceſſe, in ſuch an enterpriſe, or any thing of that nature; I ſay, a man may be earneſt with the

LORD

LORD in ſuch a caſe, and yet his prayer may be amiſſe, it may not be a ſpirituall prayer, it may not be an expreſſion of holy deſires to the LORD; for they onely prevaile with him; not that the naturall are excluded, (that is not my meaning) for they may adde windes to the ſayles, though holineſſe may guide the rudder, and keepe the courſe, and make the ſterage, yet naturall deſires may make vs more importunate, and may adde much to it: therefore, I ſay, conſider thy prayer.

Conſider againe, when thou haſt ſought ſo earneſtly to GOD, whether it be not *to beſtow it vpon thy luſts*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, *Iam.* 4. 3. when thou haſt a buſineſſe to be performed, it may be, thou art earneſt with GOD, but haſt thou not an eye to thy owne glory, to thine owne praiſe and credit in it? when thou waſt earneſt for health, was it not that thou mighteſt liue more deliciouſly? when thou deſireſt wealth, and ſucceſſe in thine enterprizes, that tend to mend thy ſtate, is it not out of ſome ambition? you know, that deſire is condemned, *if any man will be rich*; is it not a deſire of greatneſſe? would you not be ſome body in your place, and ſet vp your houſe and family? ſuch things indeed GOD beſtowes vpon men, but to haue our deſires pitched vpon them, and to pray for them in that ſenſe, is amiſſe; and my rule for it is in the firſt to *Timothy*, the ſixth chapter, the ninth verſe; *If any man will bee rich, &c.* that is, when a man deſireth exceſſiuely, when he deſireth more then *foode*, and

Iam 4. 3. Secondly, in reſpect of th: end vvhen they are for the ſatisfaction of our luſts. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

rayment *conuenient for him*; now the naturall affection is degenerate into a luſt: for when any affection exceedes, it ceaſeth to be an affection, and begins to be a luſt; and therefore where it is ſaid, If any man will be rich, &c. it is ſaid after, it is a luſt.

Queſt. But you will ſay, how ſhall a man know, when he prayeth to beſtow that, which he prayeth for, vpon his luſts?

Anſw. I anſwere, if a man conſult with his owne heart, and deale impartially with himſelfe, hee may know what his ends are; but, if you cannot finde it out that way, you may know it by the effect, you may know it by the bills you bring in. What is the expence of the things GOD hath beſtowed on you, when hee hath put a *price into your hands*; conſider how you beſtow it. If a

Simile. ſteward haue a great ſumme of money, that his maſter hath truſted him with, and his bills be, that he hath beſtowed ſo much in riot, ſo much in fine apparrell, &c. but there hath beene but ſo much beſtowed for his maſters advantage, it is an argument he hath ſpent it ill: ſo, when wee ſee, there hath beene ſo much health ſpent, ſo much time, and ſo much ſtrength, in following our owne plots, and our owne worldly buſineſſe, without reſpect to GOD, not ſerving GOD, and men in our calling, as wee ſhould doe, and that there hath beene little time beſtowed in prayer, in reading, in making our hearts perfect with GOD, in taking paines with them, from day to day, I ſay, if wee looke vpon the bill of expence,

pence, and consider how we haue bestowed our time, our health, our strength, our wits, from day to day, and our speech, (for that is one price that we haue in our hands, by which wee may doe good; it is as a bucket by which wee may draw from others; and likewise it is a spring, and fountaine, wherewith we may feede others, with the waters of life) consider, how we haue laid out all these things, and by that wee may know, how we are disposed to vse the blessings, we seeke for at GOD'S hands, whether wee seeke them to bestow them vpon our lusts, or to spend those gifts to our masters advantage; and, if we finde we doe it for our owne lusts, in this case, I say to you, goe and amend your prayers, and GOD will amend your speeding. We must doe in this case, as an angler doth, when he hath throwne the bait into the river, if it stay long, and catch nothing, hee takes vp the baite, and amends it, and when he sees it is well, hee then continues, and waites; so wee must doe in this case, if thou pray, and pray long, and haue not obtained the thing thou prayest for, looke diligently to thy prayers; see whether they be right or no, if they be not, amend thy prayers, and GOD will amend his readinesse to heare thee; if thou finde, they be sincere and hearty, mingled with holy desires, and not with carnall, and corrupt affections, then let the baite lie still, that is, continue to pray, and to waite, and the LORD will come in due time.

Simile.

Simile.

But this is not all, though it bee one thing, 2

In reſpect of the manner, when they are vttered careleſly.

beſides, when thou art not heard, conſider, if thou haſt not prayed amiſſe; it is a common fault amonſt vs, when we ſucceede not in any thing, wee attribute it to many other things, but not to our remiſneſſe and careleſneſſe in ſeeking to GOD: if a man want ſleepe, if he finde ſickeneſſe, and weakneſſe, and diſtemper of bodie, hee thinkes that hee hath eaten amiſſe, and conſiders not whether he hath prayed amiſſe; if a man haue miſcarried in his buſineſſe, he begins to thinke, whether hee haue not beene improvident, whether he hath not dealt fooliſhly; whether he hath not omitted ſuch and meanes, as he might haue vſed, hee never thinkes whether hee haue prayed amiſſe; and that indeede, is the cauſe of our miſcarrying, and not commonly the thing, which wee attribute it vnto: for though GOD bee not the immediate cauſe, you know hee is the great cauſe; *There is no ill, that hee hath not done*; and that which mooues him is alway grace, and ſinne; that which mooues him to doe vs good, is our obedience to him; that which mooues him on the contrary, is neglect on our part.

Anſw. 2. God grants our prayers oft times, yet,

But, to anſwere further, ſuppoſe thy prayers bee right, yet, thou muſt conſider this, that, when thou thinkeſt thou art not heard, thou art oft times deceived, and therefore, you muſt rectifie that miſconceit. As for example, ſometimes, when we would haue the thing in one faſhion, GOD beſtowes the ſame thing vpon vs in another; and therefore thou maiſt bee deceived

First, not in that manner as wee deſire.

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in that, it may be, a man prayes earneſtly, that he may haue a ſtrong body, to doe GOD ſervice withall, it may be, that ſickneſſe of body makes him doe him better ſervice, becauſe it keepes him in more awe, it weanes him more from the world, and makes him more heavenly minded: you know the caſe of *Paul*, he would faine haue had that luſt taken away that is ſpoken of, 2 *Cor.* 12.9. and why? ſurely the thing he would haue had, was to haue his heart in a holy, and right frame of grace; now, though *Paul* had it not that way, that hee looked for it, yet he had it an other way, the LORD increaſed in him the grace of humility by it; hee ſaw his owne weakneſſe, and the power of CHRIST the more; and when this was diſcovered vnto him he was content. It is all one, whether a man bee preſerved from the blow of an enemie, or haue an helmet given him to keepe it off; it may be a man prayes for money, and for eſtate; if GOD provide meat and drinke, and cloathes immediately, inſtead of this, is it not all one? It may bee another would haue a greater degree of conveniencie, for his dwelling houſe, and many other things; if GOD giue him a body able to endure that, which is more courſe, all is one, as if hee were provided for more delicately: it is all one, whether a phyſitian quench the thirſt of his patient by giving him beere, and drinke, that is comfortable vnto him, or by giving him barberries, or ſomewhat elſe, that will doe the thing as well.

2 Cor. 12. 9.

Simile.

Simile.

It is all one, whether the LORD keepe an enemie from doing vs hurt, or that hee giues vs a ſtrong helmet, a buckler, to keepe off the injury from wounding of vs: I might giue you more inſtances, though the LORD giue thee not the thing in the very manner that thou wouldeſt haue it, yet hee will doe it in another manner.

2. Not by thoſe meanes, which vve propound.

Secondly, as we are deceived in the manner, ſo we are deceived in the meanes oft times, in ſeeking to GOD. When a man prayes, he pitcheth vpon ſuch a particular meanes, and thinkes verily that this is the way, or none; it may be, the LORD will finde out another way, that thou diddeſt never dreame of; *Paul* prayed to haue a proſperous journey to *Rome*, hee little thought, that when he was bound at *Ieruſalem*, and poſted vp and down from one priſon to another, GOD was now ſending him to *Rome*, yet he ſent him, and ſent him very ſafe with a great companie attending vpon him, hee ſent him it may be in a better manner then hee himſelfe would haue gone, and yet it was by ſuch a meanes, as he could never dreame of; alſo you know, *Naaman the Aſſyrian*, he had pitched vpon a particular meanes, he thought the Prophet would haue ſurely *come forth, and haue laid his hands vpon him*, but to goe and waſh in *Iordan*, he thought his labour all loſt, and the requeſt which he made to the Prophet, to no purpoſe; for it was a thing that hee never thought of, it was a weake and poore meanes that hee made no account of, yet that was the meanes

meanes that GOD intended: ſo I ſay, wee oft deceiue our ſelues, wee pitch vpon ſuch particular wayes, and when theſe faile vs, and when wee haue prayed, that theſe meanes might be vſed, and GOD doth not vſe them, we think preſently we are deceived. *Ioſeph* thought verily *Pharaohs ſteward* ſhould haue beene the meanes to bring the promiſe to paſſe, and after that, *Pharaohs butler*, hee vſed as a meanes, hee deſired him to remember him, and yet all this was not the meanes, but another, which he never thought of, which was a dreame of *Pharaohs*: the like was in the caſe of *Mordecai*, deliverance came a ſtrange way, a way that *Mordecai* never imagined. *Abraham* thought verily, that *Iſmael* had beene the ſonne of the promiſe, but GOD tells him hee was deceived, *Iſaac* was the ſonne, in whom he would make good the promiſe. So the *Iſraelites* thought that *Moſes* ſhould haue delivered them, that it ſhould haue beene preſently true, that the yoake of bondage ſhould haue preſently beene taken off from them, but wee ſee, GOD went another way to worke, hee ſent *Moſes* away, into a farre Country, and the bondage was exceedingly increaſed vpon them: ſo that they thought they were further off now then ever they were before; but, in truth, they were nearer: for the increaſe of the bondage, increaſed *Phraohs* ſinne, and made him ripe for deſtruction: againe, it increaſed the peoples humility, it made them to pray harder, and to cry more fervently to GOD for deliverance, and ſo it made them more fit for it;

and

and at the laſt, *Moſes* was more fitted to be a deliverer, after hee was ſo long trained vp, and was ſo much humbled; ſo that when GOD ſeems to goe a cleane contrary way, yet it is the next way, to bring it to paſſe. *Beloved*, it is a common thing with vs, we pitch vpon a certaine particular meanes, we thinke ſuch a man muſt doe it, or ſuch a courſe muſt do it, when the LORD intends nothing leſſe. And the reaſon often is, becauſe, if we ſhould haue deliverance, many times, by ſuch meanes, by ſuch men, and by ſuch wayes, wee would attribute too much to the meanes: therefore, we ſee, when *Gedeon* had a great army, the LORD would not doe it, it was too great for him; and therefore wee ſee to what a ſmall number he brought it: ſo, oft times, men thinke, oh if I had ſuch a mans helpe, or if I had ſuch a meanes, it would doe the thing, it would bring the enterpriſe to paſſe: when we make too much account of it, the LORD, it may be, caſts away that, which ſeemed moſt probable, and (even as he doth moſt of his works, as he builds his owne Kingdome, by the moſt fooliſh, and improbable meanes of all other, ſo) often he doth our buſineſſe by ſuch meanes, that wee leaſt dreame of: therefore be not diſcouraged. Suppoſe we pray, that ſuch a great Prince ſhould raiſe the Churches, that ſuch a warre, that ſuch an enterpriſe, and project may doe it; put the caſe the LORD will not doe it ſo; are wee then preſently vndone? and is there no helpe, becauſe ſuch a battaile

battaile is overthrowne, becauſe ſuch a King did not ſucceede, becauſe ſuch a Generall had not ſucceſſe, according to our expectation? It may bee, that is not the way, the LORD will helpe the Church after another manner, that we dreame not of; and ſo for a mans ſelfe, he hath buſineſſe to bee done, or hee is in diſtreſſe, and would haue deliverance, and hee thinkes, this is the way, or none; and therefore hee is earneſt to haue it done: now it is good, in this caſe, to leaue it to the LORD, to make our requeſts knowne to him; and, when wee haue done that, to be no further carefull, but leaue it to the LORD, to doe it his owne way: hee is skilfull.

If you take a skilfull workeman, and ſay no more to him but thus: Sir, I pray you, doe mee ſuch a thing, if it were the bringing of water, or the ſetting vp of a building, it may bee, hee will goe a way to worke, that thou knoweſt not what it meanes, and yet thou wilt truſt him: why then wilt thou not truſt GOD, and ſuffer him to goe his owne way? and when thou art croſſed in that thing, wherein, it may be, of all others, thou wouldeſt not be croſſed, it may be, it is the beſt way of all other to bring the thing to paſſe, that thou deſireſt. *Simile.*

Againe, as wee are deceived in the manner, and the meanes, ſo likewiſe wee miſtake the time: it may be the LORD is willing to doe the thing; but not in that time, that thou wouldeſt Thirdly or not in our time.

deſt haue him: when a man prayes to bee delivered from ſuch a trouble, and ſuch a diſtreſſe, and affliction, hee thinkes the time very long, and ſaith, hee is not heard, becauſe hee is not delivered preſently; wee would all haue the ſmarting plaiſter preſently tooke off; but the LORD is wiſer then wee, (as the phyſitian knowes what belongs to the patient better then himſelfe) though hee doe it not preſently, yet he will doe it: therefore ſay not, thou art not heard, thou muſt take heede of taking delayes for denialls, the LORD will deferre to doe the thing, yet hee will doe it, and doe it in the beſt ſeaſon: for this is a generall rule, GODS *time is the beſt time.* When thou commeſt to pray for a thing, thou wouldeſt haue it done preſently, and thou thinkeſt it is the beſt time, all the controverſie betweene GOD, and thee is, which is the fitteſt time to haue it done; thou thinkeſt, it may be, preſently; GOD, it may be, will doe it a yeare hence, ſurely hee is the beſt chooſer, and wee ſhall finde it ſo: and therefore bee content to waite his leiſure; hee hath many ends, in deferring it, it may be, to try thy faith, (as hee did the faith of the CANAANITE) and therefore he would not heare; it may bee to increaſe thy holineſſe, to put thy heart into a better temper, and therefore hee deferres longer: he meant to doe that for IACOB, that he did, yet he ſuffered IACOB to *wraſtle all night*, and yet he would not doe it, till the inſtant of the morning appeared: ſo it was with DANIEL, the anſwere

Simile.

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ſwere went forth when hee began to pray, yet hee would haue him inſtant, and continue in prayer; ſo, I ſay, the LORD hath many ends why hee deferres, let vs bee content to take his owne time.

Laſt of all, conſider this, when thou ſeekeſt to the LORD, to haue any thing done, it is poſſible, that it may croſſe ſome other paſſage of his providence; and in this caſe thou ſhouldeſt bee content to be denied. *3. Anſ.*

But, you will ſay, why may not both be accommodated? *Obiect.*

I anſwere, ſo they ſhall, though thou ſee not how; it is not with GOD, as it is with man: if a man doe a good turne to one, when two become petitioners, hee muſt needes doe an ill turne to another, but GOD compoſeth all for the beſt. As for example, DAVID deſired much to build a Temple, the LORD had another end, hee had reſolved in his providence, to make SALOMON the builder of it; indeede this was much better for DAVID; for what more had DAVID gotten, if hee had done it? the LORD gaue him as full a reward, as if hee had done it: for hee tells him, that for that purpoſe of building him a houſe, he would build him a houſe: ſo DAVID had his end, to the full, though SALOMON built the Temple. So for ISRAEL, the LORD kept the CANAANITES among them, but it was for their profit: there are ſome paſſages of GODS providence, that if wee knew, *Anſw.*

knew, wee would yeeld to this, that it were better, that it ſhould bee ſo, then otherwiſe; and therefore it is better, in ſome caſe, that we ſhould bee denied.

And ſo I conclude for this time.

FINIS.

THE

THE THIRD SERMON.

1 THESS. 5. 17.

Pray continually.

NOw wee proceede to that which remaines, ſomething more wee might adde, for the anſwering of this, for the time of GODS granting our petitions, and for the meaſure, we touched it the laſt day a little.

For the time, wee are deceived; in that wee thinke, when GOD deferres, he denies; for many times GOD defers for ſpeciall reaſons, and yet he grants the requeſt, in the fitteſt time for vs, as the phyſitian knoweth the fitteſt time to giue the patient phyſicke of one kinde or another; and in *Simile.*

this

this wee must yeeld to GOD; as he doth all his workes in the fittest time, so he grants our petitions in the fittest time; there is an appointed time for any deliverance to be granted, for any blessing, for any comfort, that wee neede, and haue at his hands. Now, if our selues were judges, wee would haue things done for vs in the most convenient time, we would haue the smarting plaister pulled off, before the wound bee healed, whereas it is best for vs to haue it kept on: *Beloved*, you shall finde, that GOD divides betweene *Sathan*, and vs, in this case, as we see *Rev.* 2.10. *Sathan shall cast some of you into prison, and you shall be there for ten dayes*: it was not so long as Sathan would haue had it, it may be, he would haue had it ten and ten too; nor againe, it was not so short, as they would haue had it, but GOD sets downe the time betweene them both, and therefore we must rest vpon him, and thinke that many times there is great reason, why we should be deferred, when wee aske things at his hands, and you shall finde hee deferres for one of these causes, for the most part.

Rev. 2. 10.

Foure Reasons of Gods deferring to grant our requests.

1 Sometimes, for the tryall of our faith; as, we see, he deferred to grant to the woman of *Canaan*, although he did meane to grant her request, yet hee deferred long, that hee might put her to the tryall; and, you see, she was no looser by it, but when she held out in her prayers, she had her request granted to the full.

2 Sometimes, he deferres to grant it, that wee may be more humbled; as you know, *Paul* prayed earnestly,

earneſtly, but GOD told him, that he would deferre him, becauſe he needed more humility: ſo he deferred to grant the requeſt, that the men of *Beniamin* put vp to him, when the cauſe was juſt, and GOD intended to helpe them, yet they fell before their enemies twice, though they faſted, and prayed, his end was, as we ſee in the text, that they might be more humbled, that their hearts might be more broken, that they might be more fitted to receiue it.

Againe, ſometimes GOD defers, that we might bee more able to vſe thoſe bleſſings that hee meanes to beſtow vpon vs: ſo hee deferred to raiſe *Ioſeph* to preferment: ſo he deferred to bring *David* to the Kingdome, that thoſe afflictions that they endured might the better fit them to enjoy ſo great proſperity, as he had provided for them afterwards. 3

And laſtly, he defers, that he might ſet a higher price vpon his bleſſings, that hee might inhaunce the price of them; as the fiſher drawes away the bait, that the fiſh might follow it the more; ſo GOD withholds bleſſings, that wee might haue a greater edge ſet vpon our deſires, that wee might pray harder for them, that wee might prize them more, when we haue obtained them. 4 *Simile.*

Now, as he doth thus for a time, and as wee are often deceived in the time, in taking delayes for denialls; ſo likewiſe wee are often deceived in the meaſure, many times GOD grants the things that wee would haue, but, becauſe wee haue *Concerning the meaſure, if God giue vs not ſo much as we aske.*

haue not ſo large a meaſure as we expect; therefore we thinke we haue it not at all, and that the LORD hath denied vs our prayers, when indeed he hath not: for a leſſer meaſure, many times, may ſerue as well as a greater; as GOD ſaith to *Paul*, *my grace is ſufficient for thee*; though the temptation doe abide vpon vs, if there be ſufficient grace to keepe vs in a continuall conflict, and warre againſt it, if there be ſufficient grace to obtaine pardon, to vphold, and to comfort vs in it, it is ſufficient, it may bring vs to heaven, wee haue a deliverance from it, even when we ſeeme not to be delivered; though we haue not ſo full a victory, as we would haue, yet that grace may be ſufficient.

A leſſe meaſure may ſerue as well as a greater. Cleared in inſtances. 1. Wealth. Pſal 38. 16.

You ſhall ſee this almoſt in all the things wee haue occaſion to requeſt, at GODS hands, that a leſſer meaſure may ſerue as well as a greater. Take it firſt in outward things.

A little wealth may ſerue, as well as great revenues; as in *Pſal.* 38. 16. *A little that the righteous hath is as much as great revenues to the wicked*; becauſe a little, when GOD ſhall fill it with his bleſſings, it ſhall ſerue the turne as well; but, if a man hath great revenues, and GOD blowes vpon them, and leaues an emptineſſe in them; if a man haue great revenues, if hee haue great outward comforts, yet, if there be an emptineſſe, if there be a vanity in them, if they be as the huske, without the graine, as the ſhell, without the kernell, as they are often; though there bee a great bulke, and they ſeeme very fit to comfort vs, yet they

they will doe vs little good; whereas a little, on the other side, will doe much good: for in this case it is as it was with *Manna, those that had little, yet they had sufficient, and those that gathered over, yet they had never a whit the more*, that is, for their vse and comfort; you know, the little that *Daniel* had, it nouriſhed, and ſtrengthened him, as much as the great portion of the Kings meat, that others had; and therefore a little, in this kind, may ſerue as well as much.

2. Inſtance in grace.

And ſo likewiſe, a little grace may be ſo vſed, and improued, that it may inable you to doe much, it may preſerue you from ſinning againſt GOD, as well as a great meaſure: for the confirmation of this looke to *Rev.* 3.8. which is a notable place for this purpoſe, it is ſaid there to the Church of *Philadelphia, thou haſt a little ſtrength*, they had but a little ſtrength, and yet you ſee there what that little ſtrength did: *thou haſt but a little ſtrength, and yet thou haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name*: there were but two things for them to doe, to keepe his word, and to bee kept from running out to the deniall of his name, and other ſinnes: now the little ſtrength they had, was ſufficient for theſe ends: ſo that, we ſee, hee findes no fault with that Church; other Churches, that had more ſtrength, it may bee, they fell into greater ſinnes: but this is a rule which is true, you will finde it true in all obſervation, through the Scriptures, that, ſometimes, thoſe that haue great grace, yet they may fall into great ſinnes, they may bee ſubject

Rev. 3.8.

Note.

to ſome ſtrong prevailing luſt; as *David*, you know, had a great grace, and yet, we ſee, he was ſubject to great ſinnes together with it.

And againe, a man may haue but a little grace, and yet that little grace may be ſo ordered, and husbanded, and improved, that that little grace may keepe him from ſinne, more then the other: this muſt bee warily vnderſtood, not but that great grace enables a man to doe greater workes, then the other, it enables a man, in the ordinary courſe, to reſiſt greater temptations, more then leſſe grace, but yet, (I ſay for our comfort, that) though a man haue but a little ſtrength, yet, as it is ſaid there in the ſame place, *Rev.* 3. in that little ſtrength, *I haue ſet a doore open to thee*, it opened the doore of heaven wide enough, ſo that no man could ſhut it.

Note in what ſenſe this is to taken.

Rev. 3.

And as we ſay for grace, ſo likewiſe for gifts, ſmaller gifts, meaner gifts may ſerue the turne, many times, as well as greater gifts: for, you know, a little finger, a ſmall hand may ſerue to thread a needle, as well as a greater, and, it may be, will doe it better; for, in the Church there are varieties of operations, and variety of functions, and meaner gifts may ſerue for the diſcharge of ſome operations, of ſome ſervices, for the Church, as well as greater. And therefore, as there are variety of functions, ſo there are variety of members, ſome ſtronger, ſome weaker, and the weaker may ſerue, in ſome caſes, as well as the ſtronger; a little barke may doe better in a ſmall river, then a greater ſhippe; ſo a man that hath

3 Inſtance in gifts.

Simile.

Simile.

hath but meane gifts may ſerue meane capacities, as well as greater, and better: and therefore thinke not that things are denied, when the thing is granted, not in ſuch a meaſure. And laſtly, to be faithfull in a little gift will bring as great a reward, as to be faithfull in greater: *thou haſt beene faithfull in little*, may *make* a man *ruler over much*, and may bring a great increaſe of the *talents* after. Therefore let not a man be diſcouraged, if he haue not ſo great a meaſure as others haue: ſo likewiſe if a man deſire patience, and ſtrength to goe through all variety of conditions, through all the troubles hee meetes with: ſometimes the LORD layes a great burthen vpon a mans ſhoulders, and giues him great ſtrength to beare it; ſometimes againe he giues but a little ſtrength, but then hee proportions the burthen to it; and is it not all one, whether the burthen be great, and the ſtrength anſwerable, or the burthen be leſſe, and the ſtrength little? ſometimes hee takes away calamity, ſometimes hee layes it vpon a man, and giues him as much ſtrength as will beare it, and that is as good, as if it were removed; elſe, what is the meaning of that, *you ſhall haue an hundred fold with perſecution*, but that you ſhall haue ſo much joy, and ſtrength in perſecution, that it ſhall be all one as if you wanted it? ſo we ſee *Heb.* 5.7. when *Chriſt* prayed for deliverance, in that great houre of triall, the text ſaith, *hee was heard in the things hee feared*, and yet, we ſee, the cup did not paſſe from him, becauſe hee was ſtrengthened to beare it,

4. Inſtance, in croſſes, and afflictions.

Simile.

Heb. 5.7.

and so it is in this case, and so much shall serue for a full answere to that, that we be not mistaken in judgeing our prayers not to be heard, when they are heard.

And now, *Beloved*, what remaines, but that we set our selues to the duty, to doe that we are exhorted vnto here, namely, to *pray continually*, that is, to pray very much, to keepe, at least, a constant course in it; for, if we doe neglect it, wee doe but robbe GOD of his mercies, wee take them without his leaue.

Dangers of omitting, or neglecting prayer.

1

2 Againe, we are guilty of the sinne of vnthankfulnesse: for we ought to *giue thankes in all things*: againe, we neglect his worship; for you know

3 prayer is a part of his worship, and the neglect of it from day to day, or at any time, when we omit it, is a neglect of that worship, and service we owe vnto him.

4 Againe, we suffer sin to lie vnforgiven, which

5 is very dangerous, we depriue our selues of blessings, and bring a curse vpon our selues, and we

6 suffer our hearts to grow hard, and to be distempered: for, from our neglect of prayer comes that deadnesse of spirit, that worldly-mindednesse, and vnaptnesse to pray, to heare the word, and to keepe the sabboth; what else is the reason of it, why those that haue beene forward, and zealous professours, in former times, haue lost their light, and are fallen from their place; I say what is the reason of it, when they were sometime *fervent in spirit serving the Lord*? That fire was not kept aliue with the fuell of prayer; and

when

when they declined from that pitch, from that degree of faith, which they had obtained, you ſhall finde it commonly to ariſe from remiſneſſe in this duty: therefore wee ſay to ſuch, *repent and amend, and doe your firſt workes*; that is, vſe your former diligence, renew that, and that will renew grace, and ſtrength againe: therefore take heede of being negligent, and remiſſe in this duty. We haue great cauſe to be incouraged to it, for there is not a faithfull prayer that wee make ſhalbe loſt: but they come vp into remembrance; and therefore you muſt conſider with your ſelues, not onely what you doe for the preſent, but what ſtocke of prayers you haue laid vp; you know, a man may haue much in bills, and bonds, as well as in preſent money; ſo there is a certaine ſtocke of prayer, a certaine treaſure laid vp, that ſhall not be forgotten. The husbandman lookes not onely vpon the graine that hee hath in his garner, but he lookes vpon that which is ſowne, though it be out of his hands, yea he reckons that the better of the two; ſo thoſe prayers that haue beene ſowed, it may be, many yeares agoe, are ſuch as will bring in a ſure increaſe: therefore let vs be exhorted to be conſtant in this duty, to be frequent therein, to *continue in it, watching thereto with perſeverance.*

Benefit of frequency, and diligence in prayer.

A ſtock will be laid vp.

Simile.

Simile.

And now wee haue diſpatched this, wee will come to anſwere ſome caſes of conſcience that fall out in the performance of this duty, which are divers.

First, this is one; what ſhall a man judge of his

Caſe. 1.

About vvandring thoughts in prayer.

his prayers, when they are accompanied with wandring thoughts, whether thoſe prayers are ſuch as GOD wholly refuſeth, or what he is to doe in ſuch a caſe, when he is ſubject to wandring thoughts, to vanity of minde, and diſtemper in the performance of that duty?

Anſw.

To this I anſwere, that wee muſt diſtinguiſh of the cauſe whence theſe wandring thoughts ariſe.

1

The cauſe of them is vveakneſſe.

Sometimes they ariſe, not ſo much from our owne neglect, as from weakeneſſe, from temptation: and in ſuch a caſe GOD layes them not ſo much to our charge. As, for example, one that aymes at a marke, and doth his beſt to hit the marke, yet, if he hath a hand, or an arme, that hath the palſey in it, or if one jogg him while he is about it, the fault was not ſo much in him, it was not want of good will to doe it, nor want of diligence; but either it is his weakeneſſe, or it is an impediment caſt in by another: ſo it is in this caſe, this wandring of minde proceeds from a naturall infirmity, and imbecility, that hangs vpon the nature of man, which is not ſo able to keepe it ſelfe cloſe to ſuch a ſpirituall buſineſſe; and this GOD conſiders: for he is wiſe, and *knowes that wee are but fleſh.*

Simile.

When a weake ſervant goes about a buſineſſe, though hee doe it not ſo well as a ſtronger, yet a man is wiſe to conſider, that the ſervant is but weake: the LORD conſiders the naturall weakneſſe that we are ſubject vnto; and he deales mercifully with vs, in ſuch a caſe: for herein a man is as one that hath a bow in his hand,

Simile.

hand, but he hath a palſey arme, and therefore he cannot keepe it ſteddy, though he haue a mind to doe it.

But the other caſe is, when he is jogged in his ſhooting by another, that is, when Sathan interrupts him, when hee is diligent to hinder him in ſuch a duty, in this caſe, GOD chargeth it not vpon him, and doth not caſt vs off, nor reject our prayers, becauſe of that: but, on the other ſide, when this wandring of minde ſhall riſe from meere negligence, on our part, from profaneſſe, from want of reverence, becauſe we doe not intend holy duties as wee ought, wee come not to them with that conſcionableneſſe, with that carefulneſſe as we ſhould doe; in this caſe now, it is a great ſinne, this moues the LORD to anger, when we performe the duty in that manner, when we do not ſo much as ſet our ſelues about it with our ſtrength, but ſuffer our mindes to wander without any reſiſtance.

a Temptation.

3. Negligence.

Or ſecondly, when we our ſelues be the cauſe of it by admitting of looſe thoughts, by ſuffering our ſelues to be worldly minded, by ſuffering an indiſpoſition to grow vpon vs, and not labouring to reſiſt it, and caſt it off againe. You know, when an inſtrument is out of tune, if the leſſon be never ſo good, that is played vpon it, yet it is vnpleaſant, becauſe the inſtrument is out of tune; and whoſe fault is that? ſo, when thou commeſt to GOD, and ſuffereſt thy heart to be diſtempered before, and doeſt not looke to keepe it in order; that is thy ſinne, as well as thy profanes,

4. Voluntary admitting of vaine thoughts

Simile.

and

and neglect in the very time of the performance: and, by this you may learne, how to judge of wandring thoughts in the performance of this duty, and likewise you may see how to prevent them: the way to prevent them, is to keepe our hearts in tune before, to haue them ready, as *the wise man hath his heart at his right hand*, that is, he hath it ready when he hath it to vse. When a man is to vse his horse, he doth not suffer him to runne vp and downe in the pastures wildely, but will haue him vnder bridle; so we should keepe our hearts in frame, that they may bee ready to doe vs service in such a holy dutie, when wee haue neede of them.

How to prevent vvandring thoughts in prayer.

Simile.

Secondly, we must be diligent, when we come to performe the duty, that, though our mindes doe wander, yet we may be ready to recall them presently, to set our selues to it with all diligence: so much for answering of this first case.

Case. 2. About indispositednes, & dulnes, & vnaptnes to prayer.

The second case is, what a man is to doe, when hee findes a great indisposition to prayer, such a dulnesse, and deadnesse in him, that hee knowes not how to goe about the duty, and hee thinkes, if hee doe it, it were as good be vndone.

Answ. 1.

To this I answer briefly, that in all such cases, a man is bound notwithstanding to performe it, let his heart be never so much out of temper, let there be never so great a dulnesse, and deadnesse of spirit vpon him, yet he is bound to doe it.

Obiect.

But you wil say, why, but I am altogether vnfit.

Answ.

I answere, that a man by setting himselfe vpon the

the worke, shall gather a fitnesse, though he were vnfit at the first: you know, members, that are benummed, yet by vsing them, they get life, and heate, and come, in the end, to bee nimble enough; so it is with the heart, in this case, when it is benummed, the very vsing of it makes it fit for the duty. You know, wood, though it be greene, yet, if it be long blowed, at the length, it wil be dry, and take fire; so it is with the heart, a man may be long about getting it on the wing, yet, with much adoe, he may doe it; and therefore he ought to doe this duty, in such a case; yea so much the rather, because there is never more need of calling vpon GOD, then at such a time: for then a man lyes most exposed to temptation, then, if any sinne come, hee is ready to be overtaken with it, he is vnfit for any thing; and therefore, if ever he haue need to call vpon GOD, it is at that time.

Simile.

Simile.

Note.

But you will say, it may be, GOD will not accept it?

Obiect.

I answere briefly, if a mans heart be so indisposed, that, when he hath done all he can, yet he can get no life, he can get no heate in the performance of such a duty, yet GOD may accept that prayer, as well as that which is most fervent: And that you may vnderstand this aright, you must take it with this distinction.

Answ. 2.

This dulnes, and deadnesse in prayer, it comes from one of these two causes.

Causes of dulnesse.

One is, when GOD withdrawes his owne spirit, that is, withdrawes not his spirit altogether; (for

1. Desertion.

(for there may be a helpe, when we perceiue it not) but when hee withdrawes the liuelineſſe, and quickneſſe of his ſpirit, and in this caſe, if wee doe our dutie, if wee doe the beſt wee can, the LORD doth accept it, though hee hath not vouchſafed ſuch inlargement of our hearts, though hee haue not powred out his ſpirit vpon vs, in the performance of the dutie, as at other times, but he giues a ſecret helpe, that perhaps wee feele not, nor perhaps is ſo great as at other times; yet I ſay, when it ariſeth from his owne withdrawing of that fitneſſe, and we are not negligent, but wee doe our beſt, in this caſe, GOD *accepts the will for the deed*, as we haue often ſaid to you: that rule alway holds good, when the impediment is ſuch as we cannot remoue, when the dulneſſe of ſpirit is ſuch as it is not in our power to remoue, when wee haue vſed our vtmoſt diligence, in that caſe it is no hindrance: and therefore it is a great comfort vnto vs, that we haue vſed our diligence in this duty, when we haue vſed our beſt to quicken our hearts, though it be not done, yet GOD accepts our prayers, as well as if they were performed in a more liuely and fervent manner.

2. From negligence.

Caſe. 3. About praying after a man hath committed ſome groſſe ſinne.

The next caſe is, what a man is to doe after he hath committed ſome great ſinne, after hee hath wounded his conſcience, whether then, notwithſtanding he muſt come, and keepe his conſtant courſe in prayer, morning, and evening, whether he ſhall be ſo bold, as to come into GODS preſence after he hath ſo exceedingly offended him.

To

To this I anſwere, that a man is bound, (notwithſtanding any ſinne that hee hath committed, be it what it will bee) to keepe his courſe conſtantly in prayer, and not to omit it, not to keepe off, not to defere it. And my ground for it is, becauſe this is a duty, it is a charge, that GOD hath layed vpon all, to *pray continually*; that is, at the leaſt twice a day, as we ſhewed before, to keepe a conſtant courſe in it. Now, it is certaine, our failing in one thing, muſt not excuſe vs in another: when the duty lyes on vs, wee haue no diſpenſation to be negligent in it; and therefore we are bound to doe it.

Anſw. In this caſe prayer is not to be neglected.

1. *Reaſ.*

Note.

Againe, conſider this, that a particular offence doth not offend ſo much, as if we grow ſtrangers to GOD; as if we grow to a generall rebellion againſt him. As, put the caſe, a childe commits a great offence againſt his father, yet, if he runne away from his fathers houſe, and grow a ſtranger to him, that is more then the particular offence: for a generall rebellion muſt needs be more then the particular, and to giue over calling vpon GOD, to break off that courſe, to grow a ſtranger to him, to runne away from his houſe, and (as it were) to be ready to giue over all his ordinances, & a conſtant courſe of obedience to him, this is a generall rebellion, & is worſe then the particular; yea ſuch carriage, after ſin committed, moues GOD to anger more then the ſin it ſelfe; as, many times, the contemptuous, negligent, rebellious carriage, after an offence, moues a maſter, a husband, or a parent more, then the particular failing, though it were exceeding great. Be-

2. *Reaſ.*

Simile.

3. Reas. Besides, consider, when a man commits a great sinne, he makes a great gap in his conscience, he makes a great breach there, and will you haue that breach lye open? is not that very dangerous? is not that the way to bring in more sinne, and to suffer those good things that are in the heart to steale out? I will giue you but one instance for this: You see, S. *Peter*, when he had committed a great sinne, in denying his master, and forswearing of him too, yet, because he came in presently, and repented, and sought pardon, (as you know hee did) you see, hee was preserved from running into further arrerages: for hee made vp the gappe, hee made vp the breach.

Wee see, on the other side, when *David* had committed that sinne with *Bathsheba*, and did not come vnto GOD, as hee should haue done, to keepe his constant course in sacrificing vnto him, in repenting, and renewing his repentance, and praying to him, you know, how many sinnes he fell into: and likewise, that was the case of *Salomon*, you know, to what a height hee grew, by not comming to GOD, at his first failing: and therefore, I say, there is reason, that we should doe it, though the sinne bee great, wee ought to come in, and to keepe our course constantly.

Quest. But may I not stay till I be more fitted, till my heart bee more softened, and more humbled?

Answ. Beloved, to stay in this case is dangerous, for the

the heart commonly growes more hard in continuance; the conscience is more tender, immediately after the sinne is committed, then it is afterwards; and when thou stayest for more humility, thou findest lesse; and therefore, while the wound is greene, and when the fire hath taken newly holde, it is then best to quench it, before the wound be festered, before it hath continued long; for the heart will grow worse, and worse, as it is *Heb.* 3.12. *Take heede that you be not hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne*; the meaning is this, when thou committest a sinne, you thinke, if you stay a weeke, or a fortnight, or a moneth, you shall come in as well as at the first; no, saith the Apostle, *while it is to day*, come in, that is, doe it presently, for sinne will deceive you, it will harden your heart before you be aware, it will make a distance betweene GOD, and you, it will take you off from him, it will leade you further on; and therefore take heede, that your hearts bee not hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne, that sinne doe not deceiue you, and it will doe it before you thinke of it: and therefore in this case you should doe as you doe with waters, when waters breake out a little, it is best to stop them presently; if you suffer them, they will make the breach greater, till at length, you be vnable to stop them; so in this case, when you haue committed a great sin, come in speedily.

Heb. 3.12.

Simile.

But you will say, what shall a man come into *Gods* presence, who is most holy, after he hath defiled

Obiect.

filed himselfe with some great sinne, is not this an vnreverent thing?

Answ. I answer briefly, it is very true, if thou be bold to come into GOD's presence with the same disposition wherewith the sin was committed, with a minde so fashioned, and so framed, in that case thou doest exceedingly provoke him, this is a very high degree of profanesse: and therefore, when we say, thou must come in, and keepe a constant course in prayer notwithstanding, the meaning is, you must come in with a disposition turned aside from your sinnes, and brought home to GOD, with a minde to abhorre that which is evill, and to cleaue to that which is good; there must bee this conversion of the minde to him, thou must not come in with the same disposition, that must be altered. So much shall serue for the answere to this case.

Case. 4. About a set forme of prayer

Another case is, whether wee may vse a set forme of prayer? and likewise whether it bee sufficient?

Answ. I need not say much to you; for I thinke there is none here that doubt of it, but that a set forme of prayer may be vsed: you know, CHRIST prescribed a forme, you know, there were certaine *Psalmes* that were prayers, that were vsed constantly; and therefore there is no doubt but that a set forme may be vsed, wee haue that example for it: And in the Church, at all times, in the primatiue times of the Church, and all along to the beginning of the reformed times, to *Luther*, and *Calvins* time, still, in all times, the Church had

had ſet formes they vſed, and I know no obje-
ction againſt it of weight. One maine objection
is this:

That in ſtinted prayer the ſpirit is ſtraitned, *Obiect.*
when a man is tyed to a forme, then hee ſhall
haue his ſpirit, as it were, bounden, and limited,
that hee cannot goe beyond that, which is pre-
ſcribed; and therefore, ſay they, it is reaſon a
man ſhould bee left to more libertie, (as hee is
in conceived prayers) and not tyed to a ſtrict
forme.

To this I anſwere, even thoſe men, that are a- *Anſw. 1.*
gainſt this, aud that vſe this reaſon, they doe the
ſame thing daily in the congregation: for when
another prayes, that is a ſet forme to him, that
heares it, I ſay, it is a forme to him: for put
that caſe, that hee that is a hearer, that heares an
other pray, ſuppoſe that his ſpirit be more in-
larged, it is a ſtraitning to him, hee hath no li-
berty to goe out; he is bound to keepe his minde
intent vpon it: and therefore, if that were a ſuf-
ficient reaſon, that a man might not vſe a ſet
forme, becauſe the ſpirit is ſtraitned, a man ſhould
not heare another pray, (though it be a conceived
prayer) becauſe, in that caſe, his ſpirit is limited;
it may be, the hearer hath a larger heart, a great
deale, then hee that ſpeakes and prayes; ſo that
there is a bounding, and ſtraitning, and a limiting
of the ſpirit. And therefore that reaſon cannot be
good.

Againe, I anſwere, though the ſpirit be limi- *Anſw. 2.*
ted, at that time, yet he hath a libertie, at other

times, to pray as freely as he will in private; and therefore hee is not so tyed, but, though, at that time, he be, yet it is no generall tie; at another time, or immediately after, he may be as free as he will in secret.

3. *Answ.* Againe, I answere, it is not a tye, and a restraint of the spirit, because there is a tye of words; for the largenesse of the heart stands not so much in the multitude and varietie of expressions, as in the extent of the affection: now then the heart may be very large, for all that; though he be tyed in words, yet there is not a tye vpon the affection, that may be extended more, in putting vp the same petition, when another mans is more straitned; therefore there is no tye, and limit vpon that. And this is enough to satisfie that, that a set forme of prayer must be vsed.

Quest. But now, if you aske, whether that be sufficient? whether a man may thinke, if hee haue beene present at publique prayer, (which it is a commendable thing to vse constantly) I say, whether that be sufficient?

Answ. My Beloved, this is a matter of some moment, to consider what wee ought to doe in this case; for we may be deceived in it, and I answer plainly, it is not sufficient: a man that is diligent in publique prayers, that keepes them morning and evening, if hee thinkes now he hath discharged his duty, he is in a very great errour: and this is the reason, because they are not sufficient. Indeed, they are to be vsed; for God is worshipped in them, and it is a more publique worship; and when

when GOD is honoured before many, as a man, when there are many spectators, more honour is done to him, it is a greater honour; so it is when men joyne in this worship. And many other reasons there be, but that is not the thing, I am now vpon, to commend it to you; but, I say, it is not sufficient, although it ought to be done, because there are many particular sinnes, which cannot be confessed in publique prayer, there are many particular wants, which in publique prayer you cannot vnfold, and open, and expresse vnto the LORD. *Simile.* *1. Reas.*

Againe, the end of a set forme of prayer is to be a helpe for the private, (for the publique it is another case) a helpe that one may vse that is yet exceeding weake: a childe, that cannot goe, may haue such a proppe, but wee must not alway be children, we must not alway vse that helpe. *2. Reas.*

Besides, we must consider this, that there is no man, that hath any worke of grace in his heart, but he is inabled in some measure to pray, without a set forme of prayer, hee is able to expresse his desires to GOD in private, one way, or an other: there was never any man, in any extreame want, but he knew how to expresse himself, where he had libertie to speake: so it is in this case. *3. Reas.*

Besides, the spirit of a man hath greater liberty in private; there a man may *powre forth his soule to the Lord*, as *Hanna* saith, 1 *Sam.* 1. which in publique, he cannot doe freely: there are many particular mercies, which hee hath cause to be thankfull to GOD for. *4. Reas.*

5. Reaſ. Beſides, there is a particular paines that a man is to take with his heart, from day to day, which, in the publike common petitions, he is not able to doe: for, Beloved, know this, that the prayer, that is required from day to day, is not ſo much the performance of the duty, the doing of the taske, but the end is to keepe the heart in order; for, if ſinfull luſt grow vpon it, and diſtempers, and worldly-mindednesſe, the end of this duty is to worke them out againe, to renew repentance againe; and, when there is a forgetfulneſſe of the covenant, when grace growes weake, when good deſires begin to languiſh, to renew, and recover them, to put fuell to them: and this is not done by the performance of the publike onely; and therefore, I ſay, though you performe it in your families, and meete in the congregation, you muſt not thinke that this is enough, you are bound to a private performance of this duty.

Caſe. 5. About vſing the voice, and about the geſture in ſecret prayer.

Againe, this is another caſe, what a man is to doe in the private performance of this duty, whether he be bound alwayes to vſe his voice? whether he be bound alwayes to vſe ſuch a kinde of geſture?

Anſw. I anſwer this briefly, (for there is no great difficulty in theſe things, and therefore I paſſe them over) for the geſture in publike, there is more heede to be taken of that; becauſe it is a publike and open worſhip of GOD; and therefore in publike the geſture is alway to be reverent. You know how often it is repeated, (in the olde teſtament

ſtament eſpecially) that they *bowed downe, and worſhipped* ſtill, *Chriſt* looked vp to heaven, *Paul kneeled downe*, and the reſt with him, and prayed; and many ſuch like expreſſions you haue mentioned in the Scriptures: where you haue prayer mentioned in publike, ſtill you ſhall finde an expreſſion of ſome reverend geſture, and when we appeare before the LORD in the publike performance of this dutie, eſpeciall care muſt be taken hereunto: in the private, the caſe is different; there variety of geſtures may be vſed. I doe not ſee, but all variety of geſtures may be vſed; there are many examples for *walking*, and *lying*, and *ſitting*; onely this is to bee taken heede to, that, even in private, as farre as may be, the geſture be ſuch, as may both expreſſe the inward reverence in the heart, and of the outward man; but there is a libertie in that: I thinke this is the beſt rule in private, that the geſture be vſed, that doth moſt quicken, and doth helpe the duty moſt. Some geſture may bring a dulneſſe, and indiſpoſition, when another may quicken the body, and make it more fit for prayer: ſometimes lying is inconvenient, and ſometimes more convenient; and therefore, in this caſe, the beſt rule is, to vſe that geſture, which quickens moſt, which helpes moſt the duty: ſome geſtures may breede a wearineſſe in the body, ſome may breede a dulneſſe; ſome are painfull to the body: all this is a hindrance to the duty, when the change of it may quicken and helpe. *Note.*

Now for the voice, I ſay, for that, (as for the

Ioh 4. 24.

ſture) it is not ſimply required: for GOD *is a ſpirit, and hee will bee worſhipped in ſpirit*: men, that haue eares, and bodies, they muſt haue men ſpeak to them, but GOD, that is a ſpirit, delights in that which is like himſelfe; and therefore all his eye is vpon the inward behaviour of the ſpirit. Beſides, the ſpirit may ſpeake to GOD, when the voice doth not; as, you know, the *Angels* ſpeak to GOD, and they ſpeake one to another. The Schoolemen haue great diſputes about the ſpeech of *Angels*, but this they agree in, that one *Angel* ſpeakes to another after this manner; when any one hath a conceit, in his mind, of any thing, with a will that another ſhould vnderſtand it, & that GOD ſhould vnderſtand it, that is enough for the expreſſion of it; ſo it is with the ſpirit of a man, when he hath ſuch a petition in his heart, in his minde, and there is a deſire in his will, that GOD ſhould vnderſtand that petition; that is an offering it vp to the LORD, it is as true a ſpeaking to the LORD, as when you deliver it by an outward voice: for the ſpirit agrees with the Angels; as it is a ſpeech, and as they ſpeak one to another; and to the LORD; ſo doth the ſpirit of man, though, indeede, the tongue be to be vſed, as it is, *Iam.* 3. 9. *therewith bleſſe wee God*; and therewith ſhould we pray among others, and before others; and ſpeake before others: but when there is any cauſe to vſe the voice, in private, it is this, as farre as it may quicken the heart, (as I ſaid of geſture) and as farre as thereby we may keepe our thoughts from wandring. If the voice were

were not vsed, perhaps, thoughs would be subject to more wandring, and we should not be ready to take notice of them; but they would slip before we are aware; and therefore, when the voice is vsed, it must be to keepe in the thoughts. In some cases, to omit the voice, is more convenient when it may draw any other inconvenience, but that is left to every mans particular case; as he shall finde the vse of it to hinder him, or further him. And so much shall serue for this Case.

FINIS.

THE FOVRTH SERMON.

1 THESS. 5. 17.

Pray continually.

Caſe. 6. About want of leiſure to pray by reaſon of preſent buſineſſes to bee ſpeedily diſpatched.

ANother caſe of Conſcience (in the buſineſſe of prayer, is) what a man is to doe, when hee is in ſtrait of time, by reaſon of ſome waighty buſineſſe, that requires a quicke and ſudden diſpatch, and giues him not the leiſure and liberty, that otherwiſe he might haue had?

To this I anſwer, you ſhall finde, that in Scriptures, the prayers of Saints haue beene ſometimes larger, and ſometimes ſhorter. Our Saviour *Chriſt*, you know, ſometimes ſpent a whole night

night in prayer; Surely he did not take ſo much time alwayes, and, no doubt, wee haue libertie ſometimes to be larger, ſometimes ſhorter, according as our occaſions will permit. But yet this you muſt remember, that though the buſineſſe be great, yet that buſineſſe, that concernes the ſalvation of our ſoules, and the worſhip of GOD, is greater: And therefore, except it be a true ſtrait, this is ſtill to be preferred; for it is a buſineſſe of greater moment; and therefore you muſt giue a juſt weight to your buſineſſe, and not ſuffer every ſmall buſineſſe that comes in to thruſt out this dutie: for here you keepe not the due proportion, but neglect the greater, and take the leſſe. *Note.*

Beſides, doe you not ſay, when you haue great buſineſſe in hand, that a man muſt haue a dining time, and a ſleeping time, &c. Why may wee not ſay as well? a man muſt haue a praying time; is it not as neceſſary? You know what *Iob* ſaith, you know the courſe that he kept in reading the word, (for that is cleerely meant in that place) *It was more precious to him then his appointed foode*: that is, he had rather omit his vſuall meales, (for that he meanes by his appointed food) then to omit a conſtant courſe in performing thoſe holy duties. Therefore, I ſay, it ought carefully to be tooke heede of, that we omit it not, except it be a very great ſtrait, if it be, we may be ſhort in it, GOD tyes vs not ſo exactly: you ſee therein rules are not ſet downe in the Scriptures, wherein we are tyed preciſely to ſuch an houre, to ſuch

a time, but GOD, in mercie, and in wiſedome, hath left it to our libertie: onely, you ſee, this is the command, *Pray continually*, doe it exceeding much, at the leaſt, keepe a conſtant courſe in it, as wee heard before, but you may bee ſhorter in it.

Cautions about ſhortnes of prayer in ſuch ſtraits. *1. Caution.*

Now let theſe fiue Cautions be obſerved.

Firſt, take heede that this ſtraitning come not from your ill husbandry, that is, from your ill husbanding of time; For, if a man were carefull to redeeme time before, it may be, he neede not be put to ſuch a ſtrait, as hee is at that time, when he is to performe this duty: ſuppoſe you haue a journey to goe, that requires ſo much time, and you muſt be gone early, you may ſo husband the time before, that you may get time for your journey. And for the performance of this duty, and ſo for other buſineſſe, as I ſaid in the morning, when you ſhould ſequeſter your ſelues to performe this duty of prayer, take heede that you be good ſtewards of your time, that you husband it well.

And likewiſe, this is another part of husbanding your time, that you let not that, which is very pretious, goe for things of ſmall moment, for that is ill husbandry. You ſhould redeeme the time, and buy it with the loſſe of ſomething. You hane time to beſtow in the waighty buſineſſe of your calling, in things that belong to the good of man, much more ſhould you in this that belongs to the worſhip of GOD: And therefore, if it may be, redeeme it with ſome loſſe; ſo you

you ought to husband it, otherwiſe you redeeme not time as you ought. This is the firſt Caution that ought to bee obſerved, to husband and redeeme the time well.

The ſecond is, if we be ſtraitned at any time, recompence it at another time: for if it be not a feigned excuſe and pretence, if you be ſtraitned, when you haue libertie, you will be carefull to ſpend more time in it; by that you ſhall know your ſinceritie in it, that it is true, and that it is not an excuſe, and a putting off. 2 *Caution.*

Moreover, another Caution to be obſerved is, that you take not too much buſineſſe vpon you: if you be ſtraitned with buſineſſe, and therefore cannot be ſo large in the performance of this duty, as otherwiſe you would, if you did not take ſo much vpon you, your ſelues are the cauſe of it: And therfore, he that takes leſſe, he that ſpends more time in the things that belong to ſalvation, he hath made the better choiſe; As *Mary* made a better choiſe then *Martha*, though her imployment were good. 3 *Caution.*

Likewiſe, as you muſt not peſter your ſelues with too much buſineſſe, ſo likewiſe you muſt take care, that your mindes be not too much intent vpon them; for too much intention of minde vpon buſineſſe, cauſeth diſtraction in prayer, and cauſeth vs to poſt over the dutie, as well as too much buſineſſe: when a mans minde ſhootes it ſelfe too farre in buſineſſe, when it is too much occupied about it, when it is too much intent; when the ſoule cleaues too faſt vpon the buſines, and 4 *Caution.*

and cannot looſe it ſelfe to the performance of ſpirituall duties, which require freedome.

5. *Caution.* The laſt Caution is, that the ſtrait riſe not from diffidence in GOD, and confidence in the vſe of the meanes; for, it falls out oft times when wee haue buſineſſe of moment in hand, there is a turning, and poſting from one creature to another, from the vſe of one meanes to another, that wee cannot get time in prayer, not ſo much for want of time ſimply, but becauſe wee minde the meanes too much, we intend them too much, wee doe not truſt GOD enough with the buſineſſe, if we did; we might ſpend leſſe time in them, and more in ſeeking to him. So much for that caſe.

Caſe. 7. About vſe of the meanes. Another Caſe of Conſcience in this buſineſſe of calling vpon GOD is, what a man is to doe for the vſe of the meanes, for when wee are bid to pray, and ſeeke to GOD, that is the ordinary queſtion; But may wee not vſe the meanes too?

Anſw. Reaſons vvhy meanes muſt be vſed. To this I anſwere, That prayer is ſo farre from excluding the meanes, that it includes them; for, if the deſire be fervent, when we deſire any thing at GODS hands, it will make vs diligent in the vſe of the meanes, to vſe a convenient diligence; as it will make you earneſt in ſeeking to GOD, and in putting vp your requeſts to him: for, if a man ſhall pray, and bee negligent in the vſe of the meanes, I will be bolde to ſay it, it is but like the deſire of the ſluggard, that is a languiſhing, fainting deſire: Hee deſires, but his

his ſoule hath nothing; hee deſires, but hee puts his hand into his boſome; The deſires, which you expreſſe, when you pray, they are not fervent, they are not earneſt, if you be remiſſe in the vſe of the meanes. Hee that deſires grace, deſires ſtrength, againſt ſinfull luſts, and temptation, and yet is remiſſe in the vſe of the meanes, by which grace ſhould be increaſed, and ſtrength gained, to reſiſt thoſe corruptions, and temptations; Certainely his deſires are but vaine deſires.

Beſides, it is an argument that wee truſt not in GOD, that wee make not accompt of our prayers, except wee bee diligent in the vſe of the meanes; therefore wee are farre from excluding them: for, if you ſeeke to GOD, and truſt to your prayers, and thinke that they will prevaile with him, it will worke this effect, that you will bee carefull to vſe ſuch meanes, as GOD hath ordeined to bring the thing to paſſe. Even as, if a man ſeeke to a Phyſitian, to ſuch a Phyſitian, that hee truſts to, into whoſe hands hee would put his life; When this Phyſitian preſcribes ſuch a courſe, ſuch a dyet, and ſuch a thing to bee taken at ſuch a time, the more hee reſts vpon the Phyſitian, the more carefull hee will bee to obſerue his preſcription, and rules: And ſo, in this caſe, the more you reſt on GOD, the more carefull you will bee to vſe ſuch meanes, as hee hath appointed, when hee hath ſaid, theſe, and theſe meanes are to bee vſed. In this caſe,

2. *Reaſ.*

Simile.

caſe, I ſay, it is a ſigne your prayers are more to purpoſe, when you are diligent in the vſe of them, when you dare not ſleight nor neglect them.

3. *Reaſ.* Againe, you muſt conſider this, that, when we pray, at any time, wee doe not pray to haue any thing done without meanes, but we pray to haue a bleſſing vpon the meanes, and, if we pray for a bleſſing vpon the meanes, our minde is not that they ſhould be omitted; for, you ſee, GOD doth all things by ſecond cauſes, he ſaues vs not without our ſelues, that is, he vſeth vs as inſtruments, he doth every thing by men, and by creatures, and by meanes, and the end of our prayers is, not to haue them done without meanes, but to haue a bleſſing vpon them. But that that is chiefly to be obſerved to cleare this point to you is this; That prayer is not the onely meanes, it is but part of the meanes to bring any things to paſſe.

4. *Reaſ.* There are two things to effect a buſineſſe, that is, prayer and meanes both: we doe not ſay prayer is the onely meanes; indeede, then the other were excluded, but ſince it is but a part, and the other makes vp the totall meanes of bringing any thing to paſſe, it doth not exclude them, but they may be both joyned together, prayer, and the vſe of the meanes. This is enough to ſhew that we may vſe meanes, we may pray, and lay our hand on the plow, we may ſeek to GOD, and be diligent, and as diligent as any body elſe; But now theſe three Cautions are to be obſerved.

Cautions about the vſe of the meanes.

The

The firſt is, that, if we doe vſe meanes, we vſe thoſe that are right; for, if you truſt GOD, and depend vpon him, you will not ſteppe out to any inordinate meanes, nor vſe lawfull meanes in an inordinate manner: If you doe ſo, it is an argument that your prayers are of no value in your owne eſteeme, you doe not reſt on GOD; for, if you did, you would not vſe other meanes, then hee hath appointed. *2 Caution.*

Secondly, though you vſe the meanes, and pray both, yet you muſt ſo vſe the meanes, that your confidence be in your prayers: for it is one thing to vſe the meanes, and it is another thing to haue confidence in them. And therefore wee ſay to you in this caſe, that you muſt doe as hee that vſeth the light of the Sunne; he ſo vſeth the light, that he hath an eye vpon the Sunne, from whom that light comes; for, he knowes, that if the Sunne were ſet, the light would be gone. Or as he that takes water in a Ceſterne, or River, he ſo takes it, as that hee hath an eye to the fountaine, he knowes if the fountaine were ſtopped, the River would bee quickly dried vp: So you ſhould thinke with your ſelues, if I vſe any meanes, any creature, any inſtrument to bring things to paſſe, mine eye muſt be vpon GOD: for all the helpe that we haue from the creature, it is but as a beame to the help that comes from GOD himſelfe. And therefore you muſt doe in this caſe, as Phyſitians are wont to doe, they put many ingredients into a thing, but it is one principall *2 Caution.* *Simile.* *Simile.* *Simile.*

pall ingredient, amongst the rest, that he makes account will cure the disease: So doe, in this case, make vse, both of the prayer, and of the meanes, yet you must know, that prayer is the principall effectour of the thing, and the principall meanes, it is that, wherein your confidence is to be: for, indeede, it is GOD that doth bring every thing to passe: There is no good in the Citty, nor no evill, but he doth it; you know he takes all to himselfe. All the meanes, by which good, and ill is conveyed to you, they doe not doe the thing, they are but the *vehicula*, they are but the instruments, as the beere, and the wine, wherein the physicke is taken, but it is the physicke, the medicine that cures: So all the meanes cannot doe it, it is the helpe, and the power of GOD, the efficacie, that comes from him, that brings things to passe; therefore, that must be remembred, vse the meanes, that you vse, with dependance vpon GOD, with an eye vpon him, that your hearts rest not vpon them: for, if they doe, it i an inordinate vse of them.

Simile.

3 Caution.

Lastly, you must take heede of sticking in any particular meanes; for, if you doe, it is a signe that you trust not GOD, as you ought to doe. It is a fault commonly, we pitch vpon such a particular way, and we thinke that must doe it, or nothing: Now, if GOD be trusted to, he hath more wayes to the wood then one, he hath more means to bring a thing to passe then one: And therefore we must leaue it to him, who often doth it best by

by another meanes, then we dreamed of. As for example, *David* had a promise of the Kingdome; Now, when he had the Kingdome of *Iudah*, yet you know, the Kingdome of *Israel* stood out: for *Ishbosheth* had the Kingdome, and *Abner* was his chiefe Captaine: besides, in his comming into his Kingdome of *Iudah*, we see how GOD wrought the busines, without his device, by a meanes, that he never thought of, in that battaile, when *Saul* was killed, and so many of his sonnes, there was so much way made for him, when himselfe vsed no meanes to bring it to passe. Afterward when the Kingdome of *Israel* was kept from him, and he had only *Iudah*, we see, GOD caused a division between *Ishbosheth*, and *Abner* his chiefe Captain; vpon that comes *Abner*, and offers to *David* the whole Kingdome, but yet he was but a reconciled enemie; and what *Abner* might haue done, he knew not. Therfore, GOD by his providence, though *Ioab* sinned in it, caused *Abner* to be taken away by *Ioab*; when this was done, yet *Ishbosheth* was aliue still; then were there two men set by the providence of GOD, (though it were a great sinne in them) to take away his head, and so the Kingdome came wholly to *David*: for, there were but two sonnes, *Mephibosheth*, that was lame of his feet, and *Ishbosheth*, that was lame in his minde, a weake man, vnable to mannage so great, and weighty a busines to purpose: So GOD brought the busines to passe by a way, that *David* thought not of. Therefore, though wee may vse meanes, yet, after the vse of them, wee

muſt depend vpon GOD, and leaue it to GOD to take one meanes, or other. We muſt do in this caſe, as we doe when we goe to a man, that is very skilfull to doe a worke for vs: If we goe to a Carpenter, and tell him we haue ſuch a thing to be done; or, if we goe to thoſe that we call *Aquarioli*, that bring water from place to place, we tell him, this is our deſire, but how hee will worke, and which way he will bring it to paſſe, we know not, and yet we truſt ſuch a one: for, we ſay, he is an honeſt man of his word, and if hee haue vndertaken it, it is enough. Why will you not truſt GOD, that goes ſo much beyond vs, that hath an infinite wiſedome, and an infinite power? And therefore we ſhould ſo vſe the meanes, that withall we keepe our dependance vpon him, that we leaue it to him, to vſe this, or that means, as it pleaſeth him. For ſometimes, it may be, he takes away that which we are about, ſometimes he leaues vs partly deſtitute, and findes a way of his owne, that we might truſt to him, and conſider his power, and his wiſedome, what he is able to doe. So much likewiſe ſhall ſerue for this Caſe.

Simile.

Caſe. 8. About praying in faith, vvhen a man vvants a particular promiſe, that the thing vvhich he asketh ſhall bee granted.

Another Caſe is, what it is to pray in faith? You know that is required. Now there is a common errour in this point: for a man may ſay, if I pray for the ſalvation of another, I haue no promiſe, how can I pray in faith? when a man prayes to be guided in ſuch a buſineſſe, to haue ſuch an enterpriſe to bee brought to paſſe, to haue deliverance from ſuch a trouble, ſuch a ſickneſſe,

neſſe, from ſuch a calamitie, that he lyes vnder, he findes no particular promiſe, and, for ought he knowes, it ſhall never be granted: How can hee bee ſaid to pray in faith? for to pray in faith, is to beleeue, that the thing ſhall bee done.

I anſwer, that to pray in faith is to goe as farre as the promiſe goes. Now no particular man hath any particular promiſe, that hee ſhall haue ſuch a deliverance, that he ſhall haue ſuch a particular mercie granted him; and therefore it is not required to beleeue that particular thing ſhould be done. *Anſw.*

But you will ſay; what faith is it then that is required? *Obiect.* What faith is required.

I ſay, it is enough to beleeue that GOD is a father, that hee is ready to heare, and not onely that hee is ready to heare, but that hee is readie to doe that which is beſt for mee, in ſuch a particular: for both are required, that you beleeue him to bee well affected towards you, as a father, as one that tenders your good, and not onely ſo, but that hee will doe that, in that particular, that ſhall bee moſt for his owne glorie, and for your good: and, if you doe ſo, you pray in faith; though, for the particular, you know not, whether it ſhall be granted, or no. Indeed, if we had a particular promiſe, as *Elias* had that it ſhould not raine, &c. in that caſe, we were bound to beleeue in particular, but not having that, wee are not tyed vnto it: for the promiſe is the object of faith, and the habit is *Anſw.*

not to worke beyond the obiect; for the obiect is the rule, and the limit of the habit; therefore you may pray in faith, when yet you haue no ground to belieue, and to thinke, that that particular thing ſhould be granted. For example, if a father pray, that his ſonne may haue grace wrought in his heart, that his ſoule may be ſaved, it may be the LORD will never doe it; or, if one friend pray for another to the ſame purpoſe, though the thing be not done, yet the prayer returnes into his boſome, hee is no looſer by it, there is a reward belongs to him, for ſeeking to GOD in ſincerity, it is his duty, that he ſhould doe ſo. The like I may ſay for every particular caſe. And this incouragement you may haue, that there is never any particular prayer put vp, wherein you ſeeke things, that are not granted, but you miſtake in it: for, if you belieue thus farre, as I ſaid to you, be ſure, that your prayers are accepted, GOD will doe that, which is beſt for you, and your prayers ſhall not be loſt. So much alſo for that.

Caſe. 9. About a mans knowledge that his prayer is heard.

The laſt caſe is, how ſhall a man know whether his prayer be heard, or not?

Anſw. For anſwere to this we will giue you this one rule, (and that is as farre as wee can goe) that thoſe prayers that are made by the aſſiſtance of GODS holy ſpirit, it is certaine, they are alwaies heard. If you finde that at any time, you neede make no queſtion, but that GOD heares it, and will doe the thing, obſerving the Cautions, that we haue given you heretofore, that is, for the

meanes,

meanes, the manner, the time, and the meaſure: for it cannot be, but that when the heart is inlarged by Gods owne ſpirit, that the prayer is an expreſſion of holy deſires, the LORD alwayes heares: that place is cleere for it, *Rom.* 8. 27. that he knowes the meaning of the ſpirit, that is, he ſo knowes it, that hee hearkeneth to it, that hee alwayes accepts of it; and therefore, when you come in ſuch a caſe, at any time, that your hearts are inlarged in a ſpeciall manner: Marke, I ſay, when your hearts are inlarged in a ſpeciall manner, and that, with holy deſires, certainely, then GOD meanes to grant our requeſts: he would not ſend his ſpirit to be an interceſſor in your hearts, if he did not meane to doe it: for, in that caſe, hee withholds his ſpirit, hee giues vs not that inlargement of heart: onely this diſtinction muſt be carefully remembred; you may be ſometime very earneſt, (the Parent may be very earneſt for his childe, as *David* was for his; And *Moſes*, for ought we ſee, was earneſt to haue gone into the land of *Canaan*, they were things that they deſired) and yet that may be an expreſſion of naturall deſires.

Rom. 8. 27.

Note.

In that caſe, a man may bee very earneſt, and yet hee cannot build vpon it, to ſay, my heart is much inlarged in prayer, and therefore I ſhall be heard; but take in this, when the heart is inlarged with holy deſires, and that in a ſpeciall manner, ſomewhat more then ordinary, as that, you ſee, it is the work of the ſpirit of GOD, quickning your heart, opening it wide, ſtrengthening, and

inlargeing it, and ſharpening grace, and holineſſe in you, in thoſe requeſts you put vp to God, in this caſe, build vpon it, your prayers are heard from that ground we haue given you, *he knowes the meaning of the Spirit.* So much ſhall ſerue for thoſe Caſes of Conſcience in this ſpirituall duty of calling vpon God.

Qualifications or conditions requiredin that praier that ſhal be accepted.

Now the laſt thing wee propounded was this: What the qualification is that is required in our prayer: for now we haue ſaid ſo much of prayer, it is a neceſſary thing, that wee know what conditions are required, that it may bee acceptable.

1 *Condition* That the perſon be right.

Iam. 5. 16.

And the firſt (wee will commend to you, that which is the ground and firſt in order before all the reſt) is, that the perſon be right. *The prayer of the righteous prevailes much,* Iam. 5. 16.

The ground of it is this, A man muſt firſt haue Chriſt, before he can haue any thing elſe, *he hath given vs all things elſe with Chriſt*; if wee haue all things elſe, if we haue not him, it is nothing: *All the promiſes*, you know, *are Yea, and Amen*, but it is *in him*; ſo that wee muſt firſt haue him. And beſides, the generall Covenant muſt goe before the particular: for the ground of all prayer is this, or that particular promiſe, but you muſt firſt be within the Covenant, you muſt firſt haue the generall Covenant belonging to you, before you can haue the particular branches of it; & therfore a man muſt be within the Covenant, his perſon muſt be firſt righteous, and be accepted; & therefore let none deceiue themſelues in this caſe, to thinke

thinke thus with himselfe, he hopes his heart is sincere, and his prayer is right, and his ends are good: for though all this were true, yet if his person be not right, GOD regards it not. You know the blood of a sheep, & the blood of a swine, they are both alike; it may be, the blood of the swine is better then the other; yet the blood of the swine was not to be offered, because it was the blood of a swine. So in this case, the prayer of an vnregenerate man may be as well framed, for the petitions, for every thing that is required immediately to a prayer; but the heart, from whence it comes, the person, from whence it proceedes, that is it that makes the difference; and therefore that must be observed: see the person be right. And therefore you shall finde *Psal.* 4. 3. *David* makes that the ground, why his praiers should be heard; saith hee, *be yee sure that God hath chosen to himselfe the godly man.* And when I call vpon him, I shall be heard: for that is the ground that hee takes to himselfe, that hee shall be heard, that GOD hath chosen to himselfe the godly man. As if he should say, I am of the number; and therefore you that are my enemies, and thinke to prevaile against me, I feare you not; for I pray to a GOD that will defend mee, I am a godly man, and vpon that ground I beleeue that my prayer is heard: Beloved, otherwise, though we pray, and pray hard, yet our sinnes cry lowder then our prayers, they cry downe our prayers, they make a greater noise then they, that the noise that our sinnes make is like the noise of a Thunder,

Simile.

Psal. 4. 3.

when the noise of our praiers is but like the crackling of thornes, that it cannot be heard for the noise that sin makes in the eares of the LORD. Thus it is, in this case, when we come before God in our sinnes, when a man comes into his presence in his vnregeneracy.

But this is not all, but likewise, a man that is within the Covenant, may haue a particular sin, (as you heard heretofore) that may intercept his prayers, and that may hinder the blessing; So that, that sinne must be removed, before his prayers can be heard. It is true, the *Sonne abides in the house for ever*, but yet the sonne may commit such an offence, that his father may vse him as a servant, hee may denie his requests, and refuse them, when hee comes to seeke any thing at his hands. And therefore, there must be a particular reconciliation, a particular repentance, that sinne must bee removed, and done away, that stands in the way. And therefore, this Method the Saints haue kept in calling vpon GOD: See in *Daniel*, and *Ezra*, all of them, for the most part, when they make any compleat prayer, we see, still they begin with humiliation, and confession of sinnes. And the reason of it is, that their persons might be cleare, and innocent, that those sinnes might be removed, which would stand in their way; and likewise, that is a ground of that in the 1 *Tim.* 1.8. saith the Apostle there, *I will, that Prayers be made in all places, that you lift vp pure hands without wrath and doubting*: The meaning is this, not onely, that a man be within the Covenant, but

1 Tim. 1, 8.

that

that he be clenſed from all particular ſinnes, that might cleaue to him, and hang vpon him. As, for example, when thou wouldeſt be accepted of GOD, if there be any particular ſin hang on thee, that muſt bee removed by renewing thy repentance; and beſides that, ſee what the Scripture takes notice of, when a man comes to pray, his heart muſt be cleanſed from pride, (for *God reſiſts the proud*) his heart muſt be brought to an humble diſpoſition; likewiſe it muſt be cleanſed from wrath, hee muſt *lift vp pure hands without wrath*; that is oft required: *Matth. 5. Leaue thine offering, and goe and make peace with thy brother.* So likewiſe from vnthankfulneſſe; our prayers are not accepted, except we be thankfull for mercies receiued. The like wee may ſay of every particular caſe: wee muſt be carefull to cleanſe our ſelues from all ſinfull luſts, and corrupt affections, that they haue not dominion in our hearts; but that we lift vp pure hearts, and innocent hands; and that is the firſt thing that is required; that the perſon be right; that is, not onely that hee bee within the Covenant, but likewiſe that thoſe particular ſinnes be removed, that may be an impediment to his prayers.

Mat. 5. 23, 24.

The ſecond thing required is faith; *Lift vp pure hands without wrath and doubting.* You know that in *Iames*; *Let him aske of God, let him aske in faith, and waver not.* So that, though prayer be the key to open Gods treaſures, yet faith is the hand that turnes the key, without which it will doe no good.

2 Requiſite or condition is faith. Iames 1. 5, 6. *Simile.*

Now

Why the Lord requireth faith in prayer.

1

Now the LORD requires faith; partly, for his owne sake, he should not otherwise be acknowledged, if you did not trust him, when you come to seeke him, if you did not rest vpon him. Besides, hee should loose his glory; for in this wee glorifie him, when we trust him, and we dishonour him, when we distrust him; when we come, and seeke to him, and doe not rest vpon him, we dishonour him.

2

Iam. 1. 6.

Besides in regard of vs hee requires faith, and will not heare vs without it; because, as it is *Iames.* 1.6. in the same place, where faith is required, there is good reason why it is required; for, saith the Apostle there, *hee that beleeues not, or he that wavers, he is like a waue of the Sea*: that is, sometimes in his prayer hee is very earnest, as a waue that swells high; sometimes againe he will be nothing at all; yea, saith the Apostle, he is not onely vneven in the business of prayer, sometimes earnest and forward, and sometimes giving over againe, off and on, but such a man is vnstable in all his wayes; for he that trusts in GOD, will be carefull, not onely in prayer, but to keepe all his wayes right, but hee that trusts him not, wavers in every thing; he is (it may be) diligent in prayer, he will looke to his wayes for a time, but he rests not vpon GOD, he rests vpon other things; *He is like a waue*, he is not constant; and therefore faith is required. Now, when I say faith is required, know this, that there is a double faith required in our prayers to GOD.

A twofold faith required in our prayers.

The one is a faith in the providence of GOD, the other is a faith in his promise. First,

First, I say, faith in the providence, which is a thing of much moment, and we are apt to forget it. We see it cleerely, *Psal.* 146. ***Blessed is he that trusts in the God of Iacob, &c. who made heaven, and earth, and the Sea, who keepes Covenant, and mercy for ever***; you see faith there required in the providence; ***he made heaven and earth, the sea***; is he such a GOD, who is able to bring great things to passe; for he made heaven and earth; and is he not able to doe any thing besides? Psal. 146, 5, 6.

Secondly, there must be a faith in the promises, as is expressed in the other words, ***hee keepeth Covenant for ever.*** So likewise, to expresse the defect of it: You see when *Martha* and *Mary* came to *Christ* to raise *Lazarus*, they beleeved he was ready enough to doe it, (there was faith in his willingnesse) but they wanted faith in his providence; for *Mary* comes to him, and tells him, LORD, saith she, ***hee hath beene in the graue foure dayes***; as if she had said, surely now it cannot bee done, if thou hadst come sooner, it might haue beene brought to passe, so she beleeved him to be willing, but there wanted faith in the providence

Againe, as here faith in the providence was wanting, so we see, in the Leper, there was faith in the providence, (it may be, the other was wanting, but that is not expressed, it is more probable he had both) LORD, ***if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole.*** Here was an evidence of faith in the providence, he acknowledgeth his power, ***if thou wilt, thou canst make mee whole***; but because CHRIST did answere him, it is likely he had faith

faith in the promise too; so, I say, there must be a faith, first, in the providence; secondly, there must be a faith also in the promise of God: you haue ground enough for that, you haue his sure word for it; he hath said, *aske and yee shall haue, seeke and yee shall finde, knocke and it shall bee opened to you; and whatsoever you aske, if it bee according to his will, it shall be done to you.* So that is the thing wee are chiefly to looke vnto, to consider this faith in Gods promise; for men are ready to say, I doubt not but God is able, but all the question is, whether he be willing or no: And therefore, if wee will haue our prayers strong, and prevalent, we must be carefull to strengthen our faith in his promise: for, as that is strong, so our prayers doe more prevaile with God. It is a matter of much moment, and therefore wee will shew briefly how your faith may be strengthened, and likewise how you may know it.

Mat 7. 7.

How faith may be strengthened in prayer.

From Gods Attributes.

Which are of two sorts 1 Absolute

First, you shall strengthen your faith, if you consider the nature of God. Beloved, this is a great cause why wee beleeve not the promise of *God*, and his readinesse to helpe vs in difficult cases; because wee are ignorant of the nature of *God*, of the Attributes of *God*, or at least, we doe not consider them. For example, (that I may open it to you a little, and shew you the way of making vse of the Attributes of God, in calling vpon him, & strengthening our faith from them) consider, first, the *Iustice* of God, (I will giue you examples, how the Saints haue still strengthened their faith from Gods Attributes) *David* vsed this

Argument,

Argument, *Lord, thou art Iuſt, I am Innocent*; when he telleth GOD of his Iuſtice, and withall expreſſeth his owne innocencie, it is a ſtrong Argument. *David*, you ſee, vſeth it oft, (I neede not to name particulars) *Lord reward me according to mine Innocencie, &c. thou knoweſt I am righteous*, and mine enemies haue done me thus, and thus much wrong, and thou art juſt: GOD cannot deny this; for it is a ſtrong argument, that is taken from ſuch an attribute. 1. Iuſtice.

So againe, the *goodneſſe* of GOD; *Lord thou art full of mercie*; on the other ſide, *I am full of miſery*: and when theſe are put together, it is a great meanes to ſtrengthen our faith. And therefore, we ſee, *David* often expreſſeth his owne calamitie, his diſeaſe, how he was oppreſſed by enemies, and ſlandered, &c. and GODS mercie, that is the ground of it, GOD is *full of compaſſion*; as if he ſhould ſay, thou art full of goodneſſe, and I am in calamitie, and miſerie, at this time, and that was an argument whereby hee ſtrengthened his faith. 2. Mercy.

So againe, another attribute of GOD is, his *glory*; when we make an Argument thus, LORD, thou haſt an eye to thy glorie, and I aime at thy glory: In ſuch a requeſt, it is a ſtrong prevailing argument with him. You know, *Moſes* prevailed with him, when he ſought the ſaving of the whole people of *Iſrael*, LORD, ſaith he, *thy name will be polluted, what will the Heathen ſay?* and ſince I aime at thy glory in it, deny me not. And likewiſe *Ezekias*, and *David*, they vſe the ſame Argument 3. Glory.

gument to GOD, *ſhall the duſt praiſe thee?* ſhall any glory be given to thee in the graue? ſhall we be able to doe any thing for thy honour, when wee are dead? So that the Arguments that are taken from GODS glory, and our aime at his glory, is another meanes to ſtrengthen our faith.

4. Power. Moreover, the *power* of GOD, that is another Attribute, whereby we may conceiue the ſame Argument, as before, when we goe to GOD, and expreſſe our weaknes, and his power; LORD, we are weak, we are able to doe nothing; LORD, thou art almighty, thou madeſt heauen and earth, it is a ſtrong Argument to prevaile with him. So, we

2 Chro. 14. 11. ſee, *Aſa* prevailed with *God*, 2 *Chron.* 14. *Oh Lord*, ſaith he, *it is all one with thee to helpe with many or few*, and we reſt vpon thee: as if he ſhould ſay, we are exceeding few, we are exceeding weake, we are able to doe nothing, but thou art able to doe it, with a few, as well as with a great multitude; there he puts them together. And the like

2 Chro. 10. 12 we haue of *Iehoſaphat*, *Lord, we haue no ſtrength, to ſtand before our enemies, but our eyes are to thee.* As if he ſhould ſay, thou haſt ſtrength and power enough, thou art able to doe it, though we are vnable. This is another Argument taken from the power of GOD.

5. Vnchangeableneſſe. Againe, the *vnchangeableneſſe* of GOD. When one comes to the LORD, and ſhall ſay to him, LORD, thou haſt done thus and thus in former times for thy ſervants; LORD, thou haſt done thus and thus for me, in another caſe; and thou art vnchangeable, thou art the ſame GOD: this is a great

meanes

meanes to strengthen our faith: as you know, it is in your Law-suits; when you haue a president, it addes strength to the cause, and when we haue presidents for this, it will adde strength to vs, and that strength is taken from Gods vnchangeablenes: if we put them together, LORD, thou art vnchangeable, LORD, thou hast done it to other men, in the like case, thou hast done it to mee also in the like case; it is a strong argument, and and an argument that *David* vseth: You see how he is stayed by it, *Psal.22.4. Lord, our fathers trusted in thee, and were delivered, they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* As if hee should say, LORD, thou art vnchangeable, thou heardest them in the same case, when they trusted in thee; now, it is my case, and therefore I beseech thee to helpe me in my distresse. Psal.22.4.

Againe, the *faithfulnesse* of God, the fidelitie of God, that is another of his Attributes: and when we make our Argument thus, LORD, thou art faithfull, and I trust in thee, it is a strong argument, you know, it is an argument that prevailes much with men. A man is ready to say, he trusts mee, I must not deceiue him: Now the LORD keepes Covenant, and mercie for ever. When we come, and vse this to him, LORD, thou art faithfull, thou hast said, thou wilt keepe Covenant, and mercy for ever, thou canst not doe otherwise, it is thy nature, thou canst not deny thy selfe, and I rest on thee, I depend on thee, in such a case, it case, it cannot be, the LORD should faile vs; If a man will not faile one that trusts in him, 6. Faithfulnes.

certainly

certainly the LORD will not, and that is an argument that is vſed oft, thou never faileſt them that truſt thee.

1. Relatiue. Then, beſides the abſolute attributes of GOD, conſider his relatiue attributes: he is a *Father*, and a *Maſter*: it is a ſtrong argument, that is taken from theſe. If we goe to the LORD, and ſay, LORD, thou art a father, thou art a Maſter, thou art a husband; whither ſhould the children goe, but to their father? whither ſhould the wife goe, but to her husband? whither ſhould the ſervant goe, but to their Maſter, to their Lord? LORD, thou haſt commanded vs to provide for our owne, and *hee is worſe then an Infidel that provides not for his owne*. LORD, we belong to thee, we are thine. We ſee, *David* vſeth this Argument, that GOD *hath made him*. You haue it oft in the Pſalms, that GOD hath made him, not onely his Creature, but had made him againe, hee was his ſervant, *I am thy Servant*, he oft vſeth this Relatiue, that GOD was his GOD, and that hee was GODS ſervant, one that did belong to him, and that did depend vpon him. And ſurely (my Beloved) dependance, and ſeeking to GOD, is a great meanes to winne him to vs. When wee ſee an other depend vpon vs, one that is ours, that is an effectuall motiue with men: the ſame is as prevalent with GOD; and therefore may ſtrengthen our faith. Now, when I ſay theſe Arguments prevaile with GOD, the meaning is indeed, that they prevaile with vs, they ſtrengthen our faith, they enable vs to beleeue, that GOD is ready to helpe

helpe vs, and when wee beleeue it, and truſt vpon him, then indeed GOD is ready to ſecond it; becauſe then wee are prepared, we can then put vp our deſires in the prayer of faith; otherwiſe, they are put vp with doubting, and that makes them vnacceptable to GOD, and vneffectuall. And now, as I haue ſhewed you the way, ſo likewiſe in a word, we will ſhew you when we doe pray in faith; (for that is a thing that is very vſefull) you ſhall know it by this; (for I adde that, becauſe I ſee the Scripture requires it, as ſuch a maine condition, without which a man cannot be accepted, *be it done to thee according to thy faith*, it is every where inculcated) you ſhall know it by the quietneſſe of your minde, and your ſecurity, When a man calls vpon GOD, and his minde is quiet in it, it is a ſigne that he beleeues, and truſts in him, it is a prayer of faith. *Hannah*, you know, in that caſe, ſhe *looked no more ſad*, becauſe ſhee truſted in GOD; ſhee beleeved the thing ſhould be done: and therefore, if you finde ſolicitude, and perplexity in your mindes, it is a ſigne that your prayers want ſo much faith; for if you did reſt vpon GOD, you would be quiet, and ſecure in him.

How vvee may know that vve pray in faith.

Secondly, if you doe beleeue, you will continue in prayer. You know, it was an argument of the faith of the woman of *Canaan*, that ſhe continued, that ſhe would take no deniall; though the LORD denied her, and put her off, yet ſhee held out: and what was the reaſon of it? becauſe ſhee beleeved that he was the ſonne of *David*, that he

2

was mercifull, and that hee would heare in the end. So that continuance in prayer, it is an argument we doe beleeue the LORD. As a man that beleeues, that such a man is within the house whom he desires to speake with, he is content to wait long. Or one, that hath a suit, and he knowes that he shall haue an end of it, at this time, hee will never giue over: So it is in this case; if wee beleeue, we wtll be content to waite, *he that beleeues, will not make haste*, because he trusts in GOD, and depends vpon him.

Simile.

3 Likewise, an argument of faith is a diligent vse of those meanes that GOD hath prescribed, and no other. And so we haue shewed you two things that are required in prayer: That the person must be righteous, and within the Covenant: Secondly, faith is required, and likewise how this faith is wrought, both in his providence, and in his promises, and likewise how we shall know, whether our prayers be the prayers of faith, or no.

FINIS.

THE

THE FIFTH SERMON.

1 THESS. 5. 17.

Pray continually.

THE next condition required in prayer is *fervencie*; you know the place, *the prayer of the righteous prevailes much, if it bee fervent.* The LORD requires this qualification in prayer, because it puts the heart into a holy, and spirituall disposition: for it is not simply the making of the request, that GOD lookes for at our hands, but such a working vpon our hearts by prayer, such a bringing of them to a good frame of grace, by that duty, that thereby we are more fitted to receiue the mercy,

3 Condition required in prayer is fervency. Iames 5.16

that before we were not. When a man is fervent in prayer, it sets al the wheeles of the soule the right way, it puts the heart into a holy, and spirituall disposition and temper; so that the LORD sees it now fit to bestow mercy vpon such a man, that before was vnfit, by reason of his vntowardnesse, and stubbornesse of heart, by reason of that vncleane and vnholy disposition, that he saw in him. And therefore hee will haue prayer fervent, not so much because the very fervency of prayer it selfe is respected, but because by vertue of that fervencie the heart is made better: when a man comes to GOD with a request, like the request of the patient to the physitian; it may be the physitian denies long, when the patient askes things that are pleasant, and agreeable to him; not because he is vnwilling to giue them, but because his body must be brought into another temper; he must take a vomit, or a purge, that perhaps is grievous to him, but this must be done before he be fit to receiue such cordialls: so the LORD doth with his servants, though hee be willing to bestow such mercies on them, yet, because they are not fitted, he requires continuance in prayer, and fervencie in it. Therefore, we say, in prayer all the graces of GODS spirit are set on worke, and the more fervent the prayer is, the more they are intended, the more they are acted, the more they are increased, and therefore the LORD is moved by this fervencie, to bestow a mercy on vs, that otherwise he would not doe.

Simile.

But,

But now all the queſtion is what this fervencie is? *Obiect.*

You ſhall find it vſually expreſſed in the Scriptures by ſuch metaphors as theſe, *crying to the Lord, wreſtling with the Lord, ſtriving with him,* and *giving him no reſt,* wherein theſe two things are to be marked. *Anſw.* When a man is ſaid to be fervent.

First, a man is ſaid then to be fervent, when he puts all his ſtrength to prayer, when hee is very earneſt, and importunate with the LORD, when hee ſtriues, and contends with him, though he finde many difficulties, and impediments, yet he breakes through all, this is to be fervent in prayer, to be importunate with the LORD. For example, when a man comes to pray, and findes many diſcouragements, and findes himſelfe guilty of many ſinnes, and findes little holineſſe, he hath but feeble faith to his owne ſenſe, he findes much deadneſſe of ſpirit, yet he continues inſtant notwithſtanding, and when likewiſe hee doth not not onely finde theſe impediments in himſelfe; but he findes the LORD exceeding backward to the thing, either giving no anſwere, turning the deafe eare to him, or it may be giving a contrary anſwer, as to the woman of *Canaan.* 1 *Mat.* 15.

As for example, when a man comes to pray for health, it may be his ſicknes increaſeth vpon him more, when he prayes to overcome ſuch a luſt or temptation, it may be, it is doubled vpon him; when hee prayes for ſuch a deliverance, it may be, the oppreſſion growes more and more, as it was with the *Iſraelites,* when they ſought for deliverance,

liverance, the oppreſſion grew greater: now to holde out, notwithſtanding this, and to continue in prayer, and to outwraſtle GOD in it, though he ſeeme backward to the requeſt; this is to be fervent in prayer.

2 Secondly, fervency is not onely loud praying, but continuall knocking, when a man is not onley importunate with the LORD, but he continues long, he will not giue over, till he haue got the bleſſing. You know, *Iacobs* fervencie was ſeene in that, that he continued all night, *hee wreſtled with the Lord.* What was the reaſon that he wreſtled? he would *not let him goe, till hee had got the bleſſing*, till he had obtained the thing he ſought for. So I ſay, this earneſtneſſe, and continuance in prayer, the breaking through all difficulties, this is to wraſtle with the LORD: for, all wraſtling, and ſtriving, you know, ſuppoſeth ſome oppoſition on the other part. Indeed, if there were no oppoſition, it were a ſmall thing; but I ſay, when the LORD is moſt backward, when the thing is moſt improbable, when there is much difficultie, that you know not how it ſhould be brought to paſſe, yet you continue ſtriving, and giue the LORD no reſt, you will not giue over, this is fervency in prayer, and this is a condition that the LORD requires. Onely theſe two Cautions muſt be remembred, that we miſtake not this fervency.

Cautions about fervency.

1 That it bee a fruit of faith.

Simile.

Firſt, remember, fervencie, if it be right, it muſt be a fruit of faith: for there is a fervencie that comes not from faith, but from a naturall feare of want, when a man is indeede as a ſwine that

that is pinched, which, you know, will cry exceeding loud, not becauſe it lookes for helpe, but becauſe it is pinched: ſo any creature, or man naturally will vſe importunity, when he wants any thing, he will be earneſt in his requeſts; ſuch fervency the LORD regards not, becauſe there is no more but a meere expreſſion of naturall deſires, there is no holineſſe in it, there is no fire of the ſpirit, but when this is added to it, that there is not onely a ſenſe of the thing we want, but alſo a hope of mercie, a ground to beleeue that I ſhall haue the thing granted, and out of this ground I am earneſt and importunate; now earneſtneſſe is a fruit of faith. When IESVS CHRIST lived vpon earth, when men came and cryed earneſtly vnto him, and were exceeding importunate, ſome to be healed of their diſeaſes, ſome to haue devills caſt out, &c. we ſee his anſwere was ſtill to them, be it to thee, (how?) not according to their importunity, and fervencie, but according to their faith: as if he ſhould ſay, I heede not, I regard not all this clamour and earneſtneſſe, if they be onely expreſſions of ſuch wants, if they be onely in the ſenſe of ſuch neede, and no more; but if they proceede from faith, and that faith ſet you a worke to call vpon mee, *be it vnto thee according to that.* For indeede, theſe two things make vp fervencie in prayer, ſenſe of neede, and hope of mercie, when a man hath faith and hope to increaſe his fervencie; and it ariſeth from that ground, as well as out of the other, (not that I exclude the other, for it is a very great helpe, and

that which puts ſticks on the fire, as it were, to make our fervency the more) I ſay from ſenſe of our need, when we conſider ſeriouſly what want we haue, and then adde this hope, and faith; when theſe two ſhall ſet you a worke, this fervency is a fruit of faith. This is one caution that muſt be remembred.

2 *Caution.* That it be mingled with ſincerity.

Another caution is this, that your fervencie be joyned with ſincerity; for a man may be fervent to obtaine ſuch and ſuch bleſſings, as he may begge at GODS hand, very earneſtly, hee may aske credit, he may aske to haue guidance in ſuch a buſineſſe, he may aske wiſdome to bring ſuch an enterpriſe to paſſe, hee may aske health, and continuance of life, but to what end? if it be that he may beſtow it vpon his luſts, if it be that he may liue more deliciouſly, that he may be ſome body more in the world, that he may haue outward conveniences, ſuch as his fleſh deſires, if this be all, here this fervency is not regarded; not that theſe things are excluded, for the LORD giues vs leaue to ſeeke our owne comforts, and you may be earneſt, and importunate, even for the comfort it ſelfe, but yet all theſe, if they be not capable of a further vſe, if that be not intended, but the abuſe of them, and an intent to vſe them another way, the LORD heedes it not, it is no true fervency: and therefore in *Rom.* 12. 11. it is the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *be fervent in ſpirit ſerving the Lord*: when we many times it may be, are fervent in ſpirit ſerving our ſelues, we are fervent to aske ſuch and ſuch requeſts, out

Note.

Rom. 12, 11.

of

of ends of our owne, as when a man desires able gifts, high gifts, to get glory, and to get wealth to himselfe, and not to serue his master, this is to aske the talent, not for his masters vse, but for his owne vse: doe you thinke the LORD will heare such prayers? can you expect it at his hands? You shall see the contrary disposition in the Saints; when they were earnest with the LORD for any thing, still they expresse that to him, and say, LORD, we desire not this for our selues, but for thy glorie, that wee may vse it for some good purpose, &c. *David*, when he was earnest for life, when he was in sickenesse, and doubted of his recovery, what argument doth he vse? LORD, saith he, *shalt thou haue glory from the graue?* As if hee should say, if thou giue me life, I will giue it thee againe, I will improue it, and husband it, to thy advantage, and not to my owne. And so *Hannah*, when she was earnest for a sonne, she makes this promise to the LORD, that he shall be for him and his advantage; she would dedicate him to his vse, and consecrate him to his service. So *Iacob*, when he was earnest with the LORD to giue him meate, drinke, and clothes, &c. LORD, saith he, *if thou doe, I will giue the tenth part to thee againe.* I say, when the heart is thus disposed in our fervencie, in our importunity, when wee aske any thing at the LORDS hands, that our conscience tels vs within, that if we had it, we would bestow it vpon the LORD, we would not abuse it, we would not spend it on our lusts, it should not be to serue our selues, but to serue the LORD with-

all;

all, then our fervencie is rightly ordered.

3 Condition required in prayer is humility. Iames 4. 2 Chron:7. 14

The next condition required, is *humility*, as *Iames* 4. *The Lord giues grace to the humble*: and 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *If my people humble themselues, and call vpon my name, then will I heare in heauen, and grant their requests.* And throughout the Scriptures, you see, that this is a condition that the LORD puts in every where; *he hath respect to the low estate*, *Isay* 66. 2. saith the LORD, *all these things haue my hands made*, looking vpō all the creatures, the whole frame of them, they are all good, and I haue respect vnto them, but, saith he, I regard not all these in comparison of an humble heart, *to him will I looke that is of an humble, and contrite spirit*; when the LORD lookes vpon our prayers, if they come not from a broken heart, they want that condition that he lookes for: for *hee giues grace to the humble*; because such a man is little in his owne eyes, and fit to be exalted, fit to receiue a mercie at GODS hands.

Isay 66. 2.

Reaosns vvhy humility is required in prayer

1

You know, it is a rule that the LORD keepes for such as are humble and low, such he exalts; those that exalt themselues he puts downe. Now when a man is little in his owne eyes, that parvity, that sense of his owne vnworthinesse is a prevailing argument with him; and therefore *Gen.* 32. *Iacob* vseth that argument, when hee comes to put vp that petition, to bee delivered from *Esau*; *Lord, I am lesse then all thy mercies*; that is, take any of thy mercies, and put them in one end of the ballance, and put me in the other, and I am lesse then it, and lighter then it, take all the

Gen. 32.

the worth that is in me, it is not heavie enough for the least mercie. Now, when hee was thus humbled, and little, and vile in his owne eyes, the LORD bestowed that mercy on him, he was now fit to receiue it. For *David*, when the LORD sends him word by *Nathan*, that he would *build him a house for ever*; (you see how hee expressed himselfe) *hee went into the house of the Lord, and sate before him, and said, Lord, what am I, and what is my fathers house?* As if he should say, I was taken out of the dust, I was one of the meanest men of *Israel*, and a man of no account, of no worth, and yet thou hast had respect vnto me thus farre, not onely to make me King over thy people, but to build my Kingdome, and my house, to make me a constant house for ever. I say, this sense of our owne vnworthinesse, it makes vs more fit to receiue the mercie, to bee exalted by receiving such a request, as we put vp to the LORD, and therefore hee regards the prayer of the humble. 1 Sam, 7.

Moreover, *God gives grace to the humble*, that is, he shewes favour to them, when they come and aske any thing at his hands, because an humble man will be ready to doe whatsoever he will: it is an expression vsed of *David*, in *Acts.* 2 22. *he will doe whatsoever I will*: that may be said of every humble man, he is exceeding pliable to the LORDS will, he is ready to doe whatsoever he knowes to be his pleasure, hee resists him in nothing. Now, when a man will doe whatsoever God will, the LORD will be ready to do whatsoever 2 Acts 2, 22.

ver he will, he will be ready to ſay to him, as he
Mat. 22. did to the *Canaanite*, *Oh woman, bee it to thee as thou wilt.* When a man, on the other ſide, reſiſts the Lord, (as every proud man doth, ſaith the text) the *Lord reſiſts* him, the *Lord reſiſts the proud, and giues grace to the humble.* A reſiſting ſpirit cauſeth the *Lord* to reſiſt our prayers; and therefore it is, that the *Lord* is ready to the humble man, becauſe hee yeelds to the *Lord* in all things, and when a man yeelds to the *Lord*, (take that for a
Note. rule) in obeying Gods commandements, God will yeeld to vs in granting our petitions.

Beſides, when the heart is humbled, and broken, and contrite, it is an acceptable ſacrifice to the LORD, which winnes it at his hands: he ſmells a ſweete ſavour from ſuch a ſacrifice aboue all other; yea it is that which ſets a high price vpon every ſacrifice that we offer; the beſt prayers, the beſt workes, that proceede not from an humble heart, he regards them not: as *Pſal. 51. Lord,*
Pſal. 51. ſaith he, *if I offer ſacrifice, thou wilt not regard it,* but *the ſacrifices of a contrite,* and humble *ſpirit,* thoſe thou regardeſt, and thoſe ſacrifices that proceede from it; when we come to make a petition to the LORD (it was the manner in the old law not to come empty-handed) a proud perſon comes empty-handed, but an humble perſon comes with a ſacrifice, and the beſt ſacrifice; becauſe he ſacrificeth himſelfe, and his owne will, that is, he empties himſelfe of himſelfe, he opens a doore to the LORD to come, and dwell in him, when a proud man barres him out; ſuch a ſacri-

fice

fice the LORD is well pleaſed with, and ſuch a ſacrifice ſpeakes for one, it makes way for his requeſts, and therefore the LORD hearkens to it.

Laſtly, the LORD is ready to heare thoſe that are humble, becauſe whatſoever they receiue, they take it as of grace, and not as debt: whereas a proud man, a man that hath a good conceit of himſelfe, a man that is lift vp in his owne opinion, thinkes it to be due, he thinkes there is ſome correſpondence betweene his works, and the wages. You know what is ſaid of the *Phariſe*, that *the Publican went away iuſtified rather then he*. Why ſo? Becauſe the *Publican* thought himſelfe worthy of nothing. And therefore *Ezek.* 36. 31. when the LORD promiſeth thoſe great mercies to his people, he requires this condition of them, that they ſhould *acknowledge themſelues worthy to be deſtroyed*. When a man hath a ſenſe of his owne vnworthineſſe, and ſo comes to the LORD, and askes it as of meere grace and mercy, that is a great motiue to prevaile with him: for he is very carefull of that: you know in *Deut.* 8. 11. how wary the LORD was in giving this rule to them; *take heede when thou commeſt into that good land, thinke not to ſay with thy ſelfe, the Lord hath done this for my owne righteouſneſſe*: *no*, ſaith he, *I haue not done it for that, but for my Couenant which I made with Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob*, that is, for my owne names ſake, for my mercies ſake, for the couenant that I confirmed with them, that is the couenant in Ieſus Chriſt; therefore I haue done it, and not for your owne righteouſnes. So you ſee, that this

4

Luke 18.

Ezek. 36. 31.

Deut. 8. 11.

this is a condition the LORD will haue obserued in our calling vpon him, that our hearts be humbled, that a man be little, and vile in his owne eyes, that he come with a broken, and contrite heart, pliable to him in all things, ready to obey him; when the heart is so disposed, hee giues grace, that is, he shewes favour, he is ready to grant our requests.

5 Condition required in prayer is, to sanctifie the Lord in our hearts.

The next condition required in prayer is, that wee *sanctifie the Lord in our hearts.* You know, when *Nadab* and *Abihu* drew neere vnto him with a common fire, (when they should haue brought such fire as came from heaven, holy fire) the LORD destroyed them, and he giues this reason; *for I will be sanctified in those that draw neere to me.* When we come to call vpon the LORD, we know, then wee come neere to him, and in such drawing neere, wee must sanctifie him in our hearts, that is, we must conceiue him to be, as he is, most holy: now if the LORD be most holy, if he that is vncleane and impure, and vnholy, shall come neere him, hee sanctifies not the LORD GOD, (that is) he comes not to him as to a most holy GOD, but he lookes vpon him, as if he were a common person; and therefore whensoever they came to offer a sacrifice, in the old law, they were first purified; if any man were vncleane, and should offer a sacrifice, he was to be cut off from his people. Therefore, to sanctifie the LORD in our hearts, is to come with holy hearts, as in the first of *Tim.* 2. 8. it is the charge that the Apostle giues there, *lift vp pure hands without wrath*

1 Tim. 2. 8.

or

or doubting; lift vp pure hearts, and innocent hands, without wrath, or doubting.

You will say vnto me what is this holinesse? *Quest.*

Beloved, it is nothing but a sequestring, or seperating of any thing from a common vse, and appropriating it to GOD alone, that is holinesse. You know, whatsoever was holy to the LORD, in the Temple, or otherwise, whether it were holy vessels, or holy men, as the Priests, it was seperated from all other vses, and made peculiar to him, and to his service. Now the heart of a man is holy then, when it is withdrawne from all things else, and peculiar to the LORD alone. As a chast wife is to her husband, whose affections are bestowed vpon him, and no other person else; so when the heart is to the LORD alone, when all the affections are intent vpon him, and bestowed vpon him, and vpon none else, this is to haue the heart holy to him. So that now he that will haue an eye vpon credit, vpon vaine glory, vpon wealth, vpon his lusts, vpon any thing besides the LORD, that the heart is wedded to it, that he bestowes any part of that conjugall affection vpon it, that should be wholly the LORDS, this man is an vnholy man, his heart is not holy: for it is not sequestred from other things, and consecrated to him alone: for that is to be holy. *Simile.*

Answ.
Holines vvhat

And as the heart must be holy, so must the prayer be holy. When a man prayes to the LORD with respect vnto him, and hath an eye vpon him, and nothing else comes in to take away part of this prayer; if by-respect, and worldly, and carnall

carnall thoughts come in, and ſet you on work to pray, now theſe haue a portion & intereſt in your praiers, they make your praiers profane and common, they are not peculiar to the LORD, they are vnholy. So that is the holines then in ſeeking the LORD, when we are knit, and wedded to him, when one takes this reſolution to himſelfe, I am the LORDS ſervant, and him will I ſerue, I am not the ſervant of man, nor of any creature, I am married to the LORD, and his will I be alone, I will withdraw my heart from all things elſe. So likewiſe when a man prayes, ſo that his ſoule is intent vpon the LORD, and vpon nothing beſides, when the whole ſtreame of his affections are carried to him, this is to ſeeke to him in holines, this is to ſanctifie the LORD in our hearts.

And laſtly, if there be any *conſcience of ſinne*, (that phraſe I finde vſed in *Heb.* 10.) that is, if there be an evill conſcience, if a man be conſcious to himſelfe of any ſinne that is vnrepented of, ſuch a man cannot pray, that makes him vnholy: if there be any ſinfull luſt yet living in him, that is, vnmortified in him, which is not waſhed away, ſuch a man is vnholy: yea, my Beloved, the Saints themſelues, when they ſinne againſt GOD, as you heard heretofore, they are ſuſpended from the covenant; though they be within the covenant, yet they are ſuſpended from receiving the benefit by it, that otherwiſe they might haue: till that ſinne be waſhed away, they are not holy. A Prieſt, or one that was holy, if he touched any vncleane thing, hee remained vn-

Heb. 10.

holy,

holy, till he was washed, though otherwise hee were holy habitually, wholly dedicated to GODS service; so it may be with those, that are within the covenant, though thou be a holy man yet, if thou touch pitch, that is, if thy heart bee polluted with any sinne, of one kinde or other, as long as that remaines, thou art vnholy. If thou come now, and seeke to the LORD, you know what the judgment was in the old law, such a one was to bee cut off from his people. And therefore, you shall finde, this was the constant practise of the Saints; when they sought the LORD for any speciall mercy, they began with taking paines with their owne hearts, with humbling themselues for their owne sinnes, and the sinnes of the people: as we know, *Daniel* and *Ezra*, and *David*, in their prayers, (I neede not stand to giue you instances) and indeede so should wee alwayes, when we come with any request, and petition to the LORD.

First, let a man examine his heart and his life diligently, looke backe to all his former wayes, consider and goe through all the particulars; see if there be any thing amisse, if there bee any tincture of vncleanesse yet lying vpon him, that is not yet washed away, if there be any pollution, any defilement of flesh, or spirit, and let him know that it is but labour lost, it is a provoking of the LORD, to come as a man vnprepared, to drawe neere to him, except he be cleansed.

But you will say, how shall we be clensed?

Answ. 2. Meanes of clenſing a mansſelfe.

I anſwere, you are clenſed by renewing your repentance, and ſprinkling the blood of Chriſt: when a man humbles himſelfe for his ſinne, and entreth into covenant with GOD, not to returne vnto it, when hee makes his heart perfect, and ſincere with the LORD in that particular.

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And ſecondly, when he ſhall withall beleeue, that it is forgiven through Chriſt, when hee is ſprinkled in his blood to waſh it away: though thy ſinne be great, yet this will make thee pure, now thou art waſhed, as it is in the 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Now you are waſhed, now you are ſanctified, now you are iuſtified*: therefore let not a man bee diſcouraged in this caſe: for, I confeſſe, there is nothing that giues ſuch a checke to our prayers, that giues ſo many ſtabbs to them (as it were) that hinders vs in that duty, as the conſcience of ſinne, when a man remembers ſuch and ſuch a ſinne he hath committed: yet be not diſcouraged; for the blood of IESVS CHRIST is able to waſh them away. Though a mans face be very fowle, yet, you know, a baſen of cleare water will waſh it cleane, and all the filth is gone: now the blood of CHRIST is more effectuall to rench thy conſcience, and to purge it from dead workes, to take away, both the guilt of ſinne, and likewiſe the power, and ſtaine of it. And therefore, if thou haue any ſinne, labour to be waſhed from that, that then thou maiſt come to the LORD, having thy heart ſprinkled from an evill conſcience, and thy body waſhed in pure water, as it is *Heb.* 10.22. *Let vs draw neere*, ſaith the Apoſtle,

1 Cor. 6, 9:

Heb. 10. 22.

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in assurance of faith: but how? *having our hearts sprinkled from an evill conscience*: as if hee should say, otherwise your drawing neere will be to no purpose, you shall but provoke the LORD in drawing neere, except you be thus sprinkled, and thus washed, and thus purified.

I, but you will say to me, if this be required, who shall be heard in his prayers? for who can say his heart is pure, and his hands are innocent? and if this be required, that we must lift vp holy, and pure hearts, or else we shall not be accepted; what comfort shall wee haue in calling vpon the LORD, at any time? *Obiect.*

To this I answere, that to haue a pure heart, is not to be free from sin, and from daily failings, (for so indeede none should haue a pure heart) but pureness of heart, holiness of heart is, to haue *our hearts sprinkled from an evill conscience, and to haue our bodies washed with pure water*, that is, to be purified before the *Lord*, is nothing else, but to haue such an habituall disposition, which makes a man ready to wash himselfe still, though he be still spotted with sinne. So that this is the disposition of a holy man; if a man that drawes neere to the LORD with a pure heart, though he be still spotted, and polluted, and defiled, yet hee hath an habituall disposition, he hath a principle within, hee hath a new nature within, that is still working out that impuritie, and washing it away; though still he bee opposed, and assaulted, and tempted, and sometimes foiled, yet still he resists it, and fights against it; *Answ.* What it is to haue a pure heart.

as the *Iſraelites* had a charge never to make peace with *Amaleck*; ſuch a diſpoſition is in ſuch a man, he never makes peace with any ſinne; though he be led captiue ſometimes by it, yet he yeelds not to that captivity. This is to haue a pure heart, though his heart be defiled ſometimes, as a veſſell will be fowle, yet he waſheth, and renſeth his heart, he never ſuffers it to continue muddie, and vncleane, and in a filthy diſpoſition, but he hath a fountaine, a ſpring of grace within, that will worke out all impurity, as a ſpring workes out mudde: he that thus purifies himſelfe ſtill, though the fountaine be muddie, though there be many injections, many temptations, many luſts and ſinnes, yet, if he be purified himſelfe; that he will ſuffer no ſinne to mingle with his heart (as it were) to reſt there, and to abide, and dwell there, to lye, and continue there, ſuch a man hath a pure heart. We ſay, that is pure, that is full of it ſelfe, and will haue no *heterogenea*, no other thing mingled with it, ſuch a thing is pure, as pure oyle is nothing elſe but oyle. Now he that hath a pure heart, is not he that hath ſimply nothing elſe, that hath no ſinne mingled, that hath no droſſe mingled with his wine, but hee that ſuffers it not to reſt there; but as oyle and water, when you jumble them together, (as you know, when they are ſhaken together, they mingle) yet the oyle workes out, and purifies it ſelfe, it will not ſuffer it ſelfe to abide with the water. a man, that is regenerate, a man that *is borne of God*, hath a ſeed remaining in him, though he doe ſin,

Simile.

sin, yet, saith the Apostle, *he cannot sinne*, that is, he doth not agree, hee doth not mingle with that sinne, it hath no rest in his heart, but he workes it out in a passion; when he is shaken (as it were) when he is transported, when he is not himselfe, there may be a mixture, and the fountaine, and the spring may be made muddy, yet let him come to himselfe, still he workes it out; that is to haue a pure heart. So that a man thus affected may come with boldnesse to the throne of grace, and not be discouraged; what though thy sinnes be many, and very great, and often repeated? yet, if thou finde in thy selfe such a disposition of pureneſſe and holineſſe, still to clense thy selfe, though thou be still polluted and defiled, I can assure thee, thy heart is pure, thou maist goe with confidence to the throne of grace.

But now you will say this to me, (that may be objected) why? but may not any carnall man say as much, he sinnes against GOD, and comes and askes mercy, he comes and cries for forgiuenes, and saith he will sinne no more, and yet he sinnes againe the next day, and *addes drunkennesse to thirst*; that is, his sinne and his repentance they runne in a circle, as drunkennesse and thirst? how shall wee distinguish then betweene these two, that purifying disposition in the Saints, and those vanishing purposes that carnall men may haue, that never had experience of the worke of grace, of that purity of heart that wee speake of? *Obiect.*

To this I answere briefly, you shall know the *Answ.*

Difference between the godly and others, in falling into sinne.

difference by this, a godly man, when he falls into sinne, and is defiled with it, hee washeth himselfe from day to day: you shall find alwayes this, that he gets ground of the sinne, of the lust, that manifests it selfe in any actuall transgression, still it looseth by it, it gathers not strength, but looseth strength: in a carnall man it is quite contrary, his sinne still increaseth, and intends the habit, and the lust growes stronger and stronger, it gets ground of him, and those good things that he hath, they are more and more worne out, and so they grow worse and worse from day to day, and that is the property of an evill man, of vnregeneracy wheresoever, it is apt to grow worse and worse, and the more falls they haue, the more sinne gets ground, and the more they lose; but it is not so with a holy man, the more hee falls, the more strength hee gathers, hee is the more holy by it, the more wary, and watchfull, and the more hee is emptied of himselfe, and drawes neerer to the LORD, and is the more inflamed with loue him, hee is strengthened in faith, and repentance, and in every grace: so that here the rule now holds not true, that acts increase habits, but the contrary, acts lessen the habits, which is a paradox in philosophy, but here it is so.

Quest. If you aske how it can be?

Answ. I answere, in its owne nature every act intends the habit, as well in a godly man, as another man, but it comes to passe by accident, as wee say, because the grace in him is stirred vp, by

those

thoſe foiles, and ſlipps, and thoſe falls, and infirmities, to which he is ſubject: I ſay, grace is ſtirred vp in him more and more, and receiues more vigour, and ſtrength. As wee ſay of true valour, it is increaſed more by oppoſition; ſo it comes to paſſe, that the more the childe of GOD falls into ſinne, the more grace is intended, Sathan gets leſſe ground, as *Hezekiah*, when hee fell into pride, the pride of his heart was leſſened more by it, then when he ſhewed his treaſure to the Ambaſſadour of the King of *Babel*, he knew not before the pride of his heart, that ſinne, that fall did manifeſt his corruption, which hee did not ſee before. So that, when the heart is ſincere, when it is pure, when there is a right principle within, grace is ſet more on worke to reſiſt ſinne. So *David*, when he had numbred the people, that made him more humble, and therefore the LORD ſhewed him more mercy afterwards, then ever he did before, hee ſhewed him where the Temple ſhould bee built, and vſed him in that worke, and never ſhewed him ſuch mercie, and kindneſſe before: (I cannot ſtand to expreſſe particulars) ſo it is with all the Saints; their hearts are never better, nor in more holy temper, nor more fearefull to offend, and in a more gratious diſpoſition, then after their falls; and therefore conſider that, that thou bee not deceived, that thou maiſt diſtinguiſh betweene this falling into ſinne, and waſhing your ſelues, and that relapſe to which evill men are ſubject; and keepe that for a rule, that whereſoever there is

Note. true grace, ſtill it ſtirres it ſelfe more and more, as it findes more reſiſtance, even as the winde

Simile. and the water, and the fire doth; you know, the water, when it findes a ſtop, it growes more violent, and ſo the winde; of the ſame nature is grace, where it findes a ſtop, and findes reſiſtance, it growes more ſtrong, and intent. The heathens had a little glimpſe of this truth, when they ſaid of vertue, that it growes more freſh and vigorous by being wounded; that is true of grace and holineſſe, the true vertue, the more it is oppoſed, the more it growes: even as you ſee in

Simile. oppoſition in the diſputes of ſchollers, and all kind of contentions in law, or any thing elſe; the ſtronger the objection is, where there is ability in the partie, it produceth new notions, and new anſwers, and puts them more to it; ſo theſe aſſaults and temptations, when there is truth of heart within; it drawes out more holineſſe to GOD, and more ſtrength, it multiplies the graces of GOD within: ſo that the graces receiue increaſe, the more they are exerciſed, and intended, and ſinfull luſts decreaſe, the minde is more emptied forth; the chaffe that is in vs, and the droſſe is more winnowed out, and the heart is more cleanſed from it. So much ſhal ſerue for this, that whoſoever will come to the LORD in prayer, muſt ſanctifie him in his heart, that is, hee muſt come with a holy, and with a pure heart. We haue ſhewed what this holineſſe, and pureneſſe is, wherein it conſiſts, and likewiſe how the objection is anſwered, that might deceiue vs. So much for that property.

I muſt adde another, you ſhall find it *Phil.*4.6. whenſoever you come to make your requeſts to the LORD, this is another condition that he requires, to be thankfull for the mercies you haue received already: *in all things*, ſaith hee, *let your requeſts bee made knowne to the Lord, with thankſgiving*: as if he ſhould ſay, take heede of this, that whenſoever you come to put vp any petition to the LORD, you forget not the duty of thankfulneſſe, but ſtill when you come to aske any thing that you want, remember that you giue thankes for that you haue. Beloved, this condition muſt not be omitted: you ſee the *Lord* himſelfe puts it in very carefully, *let your requeſts be made knowne with prayer, and ſupplication, and with thankſgiving.* There is much reaſon why our petitions, and requeſts ſhould be accompanied with thankſgiving to the LORD: for is it not reaſon when you come to aske ſomewhat for your ſelues, that you ſhould doe that alſo that is acceptable to GOD? will a man ſerue himſelfe altogether, to come meerely to aske the thing he wants? this a man may doe out of loue to himſelfe, out of reſpect to himſelfe; but you muſt remember to doe ſomething that is pleaſing and acceptable to the LORD. And therefore you ſhall finde in the old law, they were commanded ſtill to come with peace offerings, that is, offerings, wherein they expreſſed thankfulnes, whenſoever they had any ſpeciall requeſt to the LORD, you ſhall find that was the manner in *Levit.* and other places, that ſuch a man, as came to requeſt any thing,

6 Condition required in prayer, is Thankfulnes, Phil:4.6.

thing at the LORDS hands, might not come empty handed; and what ſhould he bring with him? a peace offering: what was that? thankfulneſſe for that peace he had enjoyed, that was a peace offering; for peace is a generall word comprehending all kinde of mercies. For what is our health, but the peace of our humours within? what is our cheerefulneſſe, and joy, but the peace of conſcience within? all the comfort wee haue in our name, and ſtate, it is peace in the particular, &c. So I ſay, whenſoever thou commeſt with a petition, forget not to come with a peace offering, that is, forget not to come with thankſgiving to the LORD, for that which thou haſt received; doe ſomewhat that is acceptable to him, as well as ſeeke for that which is vſefull for thy ſelfe. Beloved, there is much reaſon for it; becauſe, if a man be poring on his wants ſtill, if it be in his mind, when he comes to call vpon GOD it will indiſpoſe him for ſpirituall performance, it will beget murmuring, and ſowreneſſe, and diſcontent, it will imbitter his ſpirit: whenas a man remembers many mercies that he hath received, when he makes a catalogue of them, and enumerates them, it ſweetens his ſpirit, it makes him more gracious, it acts thoſe graces that are in him, it drawes him nearer to the LORD, it quickens him, it makes him more contented with his condition that he is in: whereas, on the other ſide, forgetfulneſſe of mercies, when a man is onely intent vpon his petition to haue the thing done, he breakes many times into that ſullenneſſe of

Simile.

diſpoſition,

disposition, that we finde in children, that, when they cannot haue al that they would, they throw away that which they haue; so that is our fault many times, when wee come and seeke to the LORD for any thing that we need, we are so intent vpon that, that we forget all the mercies we haue received, as if they were nothing: the LORD would not haue it so, but will haue vs remember what wee receiue, that wee may be content to want, that our hearts may be brought to patience, and contentment, vnder the crosse, and to want what it shall please him, for a time, to deny vs, as *Iob* reasoneth, saith hee, *I haue receiued good from the Lords hands*, it is his answere to his wife, *and shall I not receiue ill?* so, if a good man bee thankfull for mercies, it will make him ready to doe so, it will make him content with that present want: for he lookes to that which he hath had in hand. When a man saith thus with himselfe, thus, and thus much good I haue received at the LORDS hands, what though I want such a thing? what though I be prest with such an affliction, and calamity? I will be content to beare it, I say, the LORD lookes for this, expostulating with him, and murmuring against him, is not a meeke manner of asking things at his hands, but when a man so askes, that withall he is content to be denied, if his good pleasure be so. Now, thankfulnesse for mercy, makes vs ready to be so affected, to be willing to be denied, to be content to resigne our selues to the LORD, & therefore he will haue thankfulnesse to goe with it,

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whenſoever wee come to aske any things at his hands. And therefore obſerue, that whenſoever you come ſo ſeeke the LORD, you be thankfull for the mercies you haue had, remember them; for it is a great meanes to prevaile in our requeſts. Thankfulneſſe is (as it were) the incenſe, that perfumes your petitions, that makes them acceptable, and prevalent with the LORD, ſo much the ſooner. Prayer goes vp without incenſe, when wee offer vp our petitions without thankfulneſſe; becauſe that is a ſacrifice, as you know it is called the *calues of our lips*, and ever when you joyne thankfulneſſe with your petitions, it is like a ſacrifice mingled with it, that helpes to prevaile for you.

7 Condition required in prayer, is, to come in the name of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

The next condition is, and it muſt not be forgotten, of all the reſt, that we come to the *Lord, in the name of Ieſus Chriſt.* This is a thing commonly knowne, you will ſay, who knowes not that, except we come in the name of Chriſt, no petition can be acceptable? Beloved, I ſay to you in that caſe, as the Apoſtle *Iames* ſpeakes, *Iam.* 4. where he giues this rule, that we ſhould ſay, *if the Lord will we will doe ſuch and ſuch a thing to morrow, &c.* and when the anſwere would be ready, who knowes not this? ſaith hee, if you know the will of the LORD, and doe it not, your judgement ſhall be greater; ſo I ſay, if any doe not practiſe this, (and it is a thing we are exceeding ready to forget, or wee are ready to doe it in a formall, and in a cuſtomary manner, but to doe it in good earneſt, as wee ought to doe it,

Iam. 4.

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therein commonly wee come short) you know how great a sinne it was, in the olde law, to offer without a Priest; in the 17 of *Leuiticus* it is said there, if any man brought his sacrifice, though it were the best sacrifice and the choise, yet, saith the text, *if he did not bring it to the priest, and to the Altar, but slay his sacrifice else where, without a Priest, such a man was guiltie of blond, and was to be cut off from his people*; that is, hee was to be cut off by the Priest, by excommunication, and after by the civill Magistrate. You know, it was *Vzziahs* fault to offer incense, when it was proper to the Priest to doe it? The same sinne we commit when we come to the LORD, and thinke, because wee haue repented, and prayed fervently, because wee thinke, our hearts and spirits are in a good disposition, because we know no sinne, of which wee are conscious, for this cause wee thinke that wee shall bee heard. It is true: the LORD requires these qualifications, in the partie, when hee prayes; but take heede of thinking to bee heard for this, this is to offer without a Priest. You must come thus to the LORD, and say vnto him, LORD, I confesse (notwithstanding all this) I am vnworthy, I haue nothing in me, why thou shouldest regard mee, it cannot be, that either I, or my prayer should be acceptable, but I beseech thee, take them at the hands of CHRIST, our *High Priest*, hee that is *entred into the vaile*, he, that takes the *prayers of the Saints*, and *mingles them with sweete odours*; when a man can really doe

Levit. 17.

doe this, with dependance vpon Chriſt, and come boldly in his name, that is to offer a ſacrifice to him; and this we muſt carefully remember; and therefore we ſee an excellent expreſſion
Levit: 5. 11. of this in *Levit.* 5. where this is made cleare to you, that it is not any excellency in the perſon, not any fervency in the prayer, not any pureneſſe, or holineſſe that is found in him, nothing that comes from man, that cauſeth his prayer to be acceptable, but it is the Prieſt, in that place from verſ. 8. to the 11. you ſhall finde there the law was, that he that came to ſacrifice, *muſt bring a ſheepe, or a ſhee goat*, but if hee were not ſo rich as to do ſo, he was able enough to bring *two turtle Doues*; yet if he were not able to do that, then, ſaith the text, *he ſhall bring the tenth part of an Epha of fine flowre*, (a very ſmall thing) and, ſaith he, *let him giue this to the Prieſt, and hee ſhall make an attonement for him, and his ſin ſhall be forgiven.* Whence I obſerue this, that it is not the goodneſſe of the ſacrifice, the price, nor the choiſenes nor the excellency of that, when they came with a thouſand Rammes, and ſo many ſheepe, and bullocks, (as you reade of many great ſacrifices, that were offred by the Kings) yet the tenth part of an epha of fine flower, which was exceeding little, this prevailed fully as much; it ſhewes evidently, that it is not in the ſacrifice, but the pooreſt, and the ſmalleſt, and the meaneſt ſacrifice will prevaile with God, as well as the richeſt, and the greateſt. What is the reaſon? For, ſaith he, it is the Prieſt, that muſt offer it, he

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makes it acceptable; so in this case, let the sacrifice be never so meane, yet if it be Christ, that offers the sacrifice, if it bee commended to the priest, and he offers it, the LORD will accept it. You shall find that rule, *Levit.*5.11. *He that brings a sacrifice*, (this caution was given) *he must put no incense to it, neither oyle.* But should the sacrifice be offered without incense? No, you shall find in *Levit.* 16. that alwayes, *the priest*, when he entred into the *holie of holiest*, hee *burnt incense, that they cloud of that incense, might cover the Mercy seat*: the meaning is this, that when any man comes to offer a prayer to the LORD, he can put no incense to it, the priest only he must put in incense, that is, IESVS CHRIST only must offer the sacrifice, wherein the LORD smells a savour of rest: for the LORD expresseth himselfe in this manner, as if he were disquieted for sinne, and can take no rest; now, when *Iesus Christ* offers a sacrifice, he smells a savour of rest; because it comes from him, in whom he is well pleased: so, I say, wee must be carefull, that we remember we come in the name of Christ.

Levit: 5. 11.

Levit: 16 12, 13

But, you will say, every man doth so, and how shall we know it?

Obiect.

You shall know it by this, if you haue boldnesse, and confidence, that is an argument that you looke not vpon your selues, but vpon Christ When a man is so exceeding timerous, and doubting, and fearefull, that he dares not come to the throne of grace, or, if hee doe, yet hee makes a great question, whether he shall be heard

Answ.

or

or no, this is too much looking to himſelfe, here the high prieſt is forgotten. If thou come in his name, there is enough to carry thee out, it will breede boldneſſe in thee, it will breede confidence: if thou come in the name of Chriſt, and offer vp thy prayers through him, it will cauſe thee, in every petition thou putteſt vp, to thinke thy ſelfe ſo much beholding to Chriſt, that thou wilt be ready to ſay, in thy heart, whenſoever any petition is granted thee, I may thanke *Ieſus Chriſt* for this. When a man, I ſay, ſhall bee ſo much put vpon his ſcore, it will make him ſo much indebted to the LORD *Ieſus* for his ſinne that is remitted, and this Petition that hee hath granted, that his heart ſhall be more inlarged to thankfulneſſe, when he is able to conſider the benefit of redemption, and is ready to ſay with himſelfe, if *Ieſus Chriſt* had not dyed, if I had not had ſuch an high Prieſt, that hath entred into the very heavens, as the Apoſtle ſaith *Heb. 9. to make interceſſion for me*, I had loſt this benefit, I had never come to haue put vp a prayer to the *Lord*, or, if I had, it ſhould not haue been heard.

Heb. 9.

Obiect. But you will ſay to mee, if wee be heard for Chriſt; then though a man be ſinful and though hee haue none of the precedent conditions; though he haue not that holineſſe that is required, if the Prieſt make him acceptable, why may he not hope as well as the moſt holy man?

Anſw. I anſwer, briefly, though the Prieſt giue all acceptance to the ſacrifice, and our prayers are accepted through him, yet that is not all, there are

are two things beſides required, that the perſon that brings the ſacrifice, be cleane; no impure perſon was to bring a ſacrifice: ſecondly, that the ſacrifice be without blemiſh, he that hath a male, and brings a female, is curſed: So this is required, that the perſon be *righteous*, and that the *prayer* be *fervent*, ſuch as is indited by the helpe of GOD s ſpirit, that it may be a ſacrifice fit for the LORD. But now, that we haue from *Chriſt*, is this, that though the perſon be ſo, and the prayer thus qualified, and haue thoſe forenoted conditions in it, yet it is not acceptable, without the Prieſt. And therefore this ſhould incourage you, when you conſider the glorious GOD, his honeſſe, that great diſtance betweene him and you, and your ſelues, on the other ſide, how vile and ſinfull you are, and vnfit to come and put vp your requeſts to him; now, when you thinke of a Mediator, of an high Prieſt, who is entred into heaven, who is gone thither, and ſits at the right hand of Majeſtie, making interceſſion for you, when you conſider there is one high Prieſt, who is able to prevaile, not like the Prieſts in the law, but one that is over the houſe of GOD, one that is the very ſon, that is not entred in through the blood of Bulls, and Goates, but with his owne blood; when out of this you ſhall receiue confidence, and come neere him with boldneſſe, this is to make vſe of Chriſt, and to offer ſacrifice in him. There is no more remaining now, but that when you haue conſidered all the conditions mentioned, and fitted your prayers accor-

ding to them, that you be confident, and expect much, that when you haue prayed, you may say thus, LORD, I expect now the granting of them, thou canst not now deny them, LORD, I will wait now. And this is our fault, when we haue prayed, and the thing comes not presently, wee are readie to giue over, we are not willing to waite. Beloved, that is one thing specially to bee remembred, we must so farre magnify our prayers, wee must set a price vpon them so farre, and so esteeme them, and thinke them of that worth, that they will bring the thing to passe. If a man take a drugg, or a medicine, or an herbe, and vse it to a wound, or a disease, once, or twice, or thrice, and, if he see it doth no good, he will lay it aside, and take another medicine: for, saith he, I haue tryed it, and it will doe me no good; so a man doth with his prayers, he saith, I haue sought to the LORD, I haue prayed for this thing twice, or thrice, and it is not granted me; and therefore he is ready to lay it aside, as if it were not effectuall, and to take another meanes; this neglect of prayer is not to know the force of the medicine. You must know therefore of what efficacie prayer is, and trust it, and not giue over, (for it is effectuall to bring the thing to passe) and not make hast, but stay, and waite, it was *Sarahs* fault, when *Abraham* and shee sought to the LORD for a sonne, she made too much hast to giue *Hagar* to *Abraham*, when they should haue stayed till the LORD had done it his owne way. So *Rebeccah*, there was a promise, and no doubt,

Iacob,

Iacob, and shee prayed for the fulfilling of that promise, but she made too much haste, she tooke a wrong way to get the blessing by lying, this was not waiting, but a stepping out to another meanes; because they thought prayer and dependance vpon GOD would not doe it. So *Saul* would not waite vpon GOD, but he would offer sacrifice, this was to make haste. And so it is, when a man is discouraged; *David*, when the thing was not presently granted, he was ready to giue over, and falls to a desperate complaint, saying, *one day I shall fall by the hands of Saul.* Take heede of this, and when we offer our prayers thus, learne to know what they are, learne to trust them, and to depend, and waite vpon GOD, say certainly, I shall not be denied, the thing shall surely be granted.

So much for this time, and this text.

FINIS.